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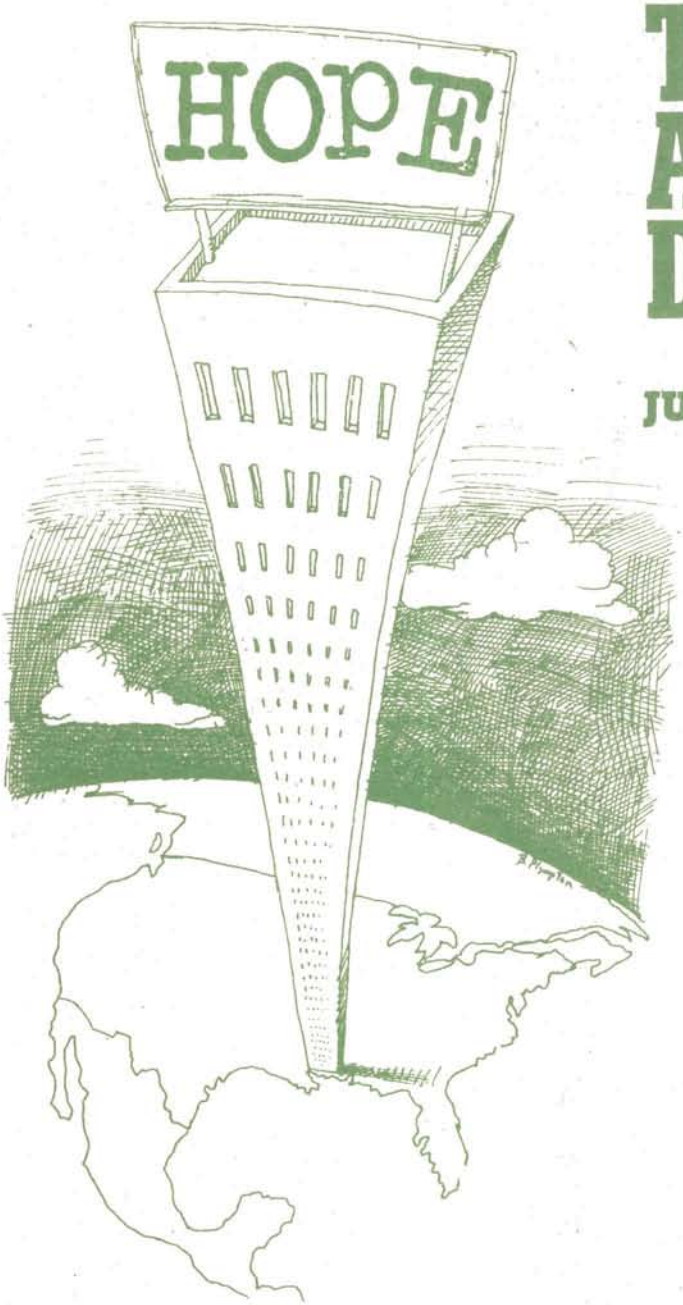

THE AMERICAN DREAM

JURGEN MOLTMANN

A PEOPLE'S PARISH
MICHAEL TRUE

DOWN IN FLAMES
FRANK GETLEIN

ON THE ROAD
ABIGAIL McCARTHY

CASANOVA'S LAW
COKIE ROBERTS

PAPABILE BENELLI
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LOOKING AT AMERICA
DENNIS O'BRIEN

ALSO: RALPH McINERNY, JOSEPH H. FICHTER, LINDA KUEHL, PATRICK SAMWAY, J.A. APPLEYARD and . . . AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS on 'EXPORTING DEATH TO IRELAND'

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NEWS & VIEWS

J.P. Stevens, Co.

As the *North Carolina Anvil* has noted, not everyone thinks J.P.Stevens Co. is a bum employer.

Take James Finley, chairman of the board of directors. His salary last year was $184,000, with a bonus of another $184,000. Whitney Stevens, company president, made $296,00, which is pretty good too. Both will be entitled to a pension of $91,000 a year. By contrast, workers who retired from Stevens in 1974 received lump-sum payments of $770 and no pension.

J.P.Stevens is the giant textile outfit—45,000 workers at 85 plants—that has been fighting to thwart organizing efforts of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union . . . and that also has been found guilty of violating the National Labor Relations Act 13 times, being forced to pay $1.3 million in back wages to 291 workers.

In addition the company has been under investigation by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for alleged multiple violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and has lost a series of federal district court cases involving discriminatory employment practices.

It's no St. Joseph the Worker outfit obviously.

The pressure has been on J.P.Stevens for some time. Company officials caught heat from several shareholders at last March's annual meeting, and four Catholic organizations collected more than 5.5 percent of the shares voted on resolutions relating to the company's labor policies, including racial and male/female employment practices.

Building up now is a boycott of Stevens products, an effort supported by Coretta Scott King and the Catholic Committee of Appalachia, among others.

Stevens products and their brand names include: *towels* (Fine Arts, Tastemaker, Utica); *blankets* (Forstmann, Utica); *sheets and pillowcases* (Beauti-Blend, Beauticale, Fine Arts, etc., including designer labels: Yves St. Laurent and Angelo Donghia); *carpets* (Gulistan, Contender, Merryweather, Tastemaker); *table linen* (Simtex); *hosiery* (Big Mama, Finesse, Hip-Lets, Spirit).

Stevens' workers have been seeking to organize for 13 years, and the effort by religious groups to help them is humane, not ideological. Florence Little of the United Methodist Church's World Division put it this way: "The support of the union is not our basic concern. We're concerned about the right of J.P. Stevens employees to engage in collective bargaining without harassment." It's a reasonable position.

Helping Hands

The Los Angeles Catholic Worker Community runs a clinic and hospitality house, and serves up to one thousand meals a day in an old two-story hotel in the city's skid-row sector.

The word on the streets is that the Worker has the "best food on the row" and some of the best services. For how long suddenly became the question.

Six months ago the building's ownership changed hands, and the rent shot from $475 to $1700 a month. At the same time all maintenance was suspended.

The community first tried negotiation; no success. Then it hunted for other accommodations in square-mile skid row; no luck. Eviction papers were filed and on June 29 the marshals were to arrive.

A reprieve came at the eleventh hour. The new owner sat down with community representatives and accepted $9,000—the last of the Christmas donations fund and all the money in their savings—towards purchase of the property.

Needed now was $55,000 by Aug. 14, else the Los Angeles Catholic Worker Community would be out its $9,000 and out the building it knows as Hospitality Kitchen and Zedakah House.

"On the face of it, the situation seems impossible," said Catherine Morris of the Catholic Worker community. "We don't have a lot of wealthy or powerful friends to turn to; our friends are the people we live with and serve. But we are trusting that people who see our need and the urgency of the situation will be moved to stand with us."

Well, miracles still happen in California. An appeal went out, and within two weeks the Los Angeles Catholic Worker Community had its $55,000, through contributions small and large. It's the good-news story of summer.

Jumpin' Jimmineу

It's open season, obviously, for the punsters on little Amy, big Jimmy and the rest of the Carters.

Washingtonian magazine started it with a variation on the familiar Save-the-Children-Fund advertisement. The variant featured a picture of a scruffy Amy, cradling a cat, and, in the *Daily News*'s words, "looking misty, much like the kids who stare out at you" from bona fide appeal ads.

Placed by "Overprivileged Kids, Inc.," the ad asked funds so that children like Amy can spend "two weeks with real people." Mailing address for contributions turned out to be that of Democratic National Committee headquarters.

Washingtonian editor John Limpert thought it nifty satire. But the White House was not amused, and the Postal Service immediately dropped its mail sacks to begin an investigation into possible violation of laws against solicitation on behalf of fraudulent organizations.

Meanwhile, *Punch*, the irreverent British magazine, was off the press with a series of spoof letters purportedly written by Miss Lillian, but actually the work of *Punch* deputy editor Alan Coren.

The letters chronicled the goings and comings of the "Carters," including Uncle Stinkweed Carter, Cousin Nehmiah Honest Carter, Auntie Gutpump Carter, Great Auntie Eulalia Moonshine Carter, Uncle Snob Carter III, Private Chickenhaid Carter and other assorted "relatives."

Well, it's one thing to spoof the Royal Family and other venerable British institutions, but you don't bite the hand that feeds you. *Punch*, accordingly, was hauled before a watchdog committee to answer an accusation of unethical conduct.

Odds and Ends

—Said the military on the razing of a South Vietnamese village: "We destroyed it in order to save it." Says the military in defense of its neutron bomb: "We want to deter attack and defend territory without destroying what we want to save." Says I: "Orwell is alive and well and working at the Pentagon." Sworn this day, July 11, 1984. JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Prevalent Cynicism

Omaha, Neb.

To the Editors: Douglas Mattern's 'With Humanity as Pawns" [May 27] had more errors, misstatements and non sequiturs per inch than *Ramparts* in its heyday. A recruit earns $377 a month, not $83. The Pentagon is not "the only branch of government which has an office directly in the Congressional Office Building (sic)". The Civil Service Commission (those warmongers) and the Veterans Administration (ditto) also have been given space on Capitol Hill for the same reasons space was given to the Department of Defense: constituent service. Who are those "hostile neighbors" "surrounding" the USSR and forcing her to spend money on "strictly defensive purposes"? Canada? Finland? The late Baltic States? Poland? Czechoslovakia? Hungary? Rumania? Turkey? Iran? Afghanistan? Mongolia? North Korea? Japan? . . . or just China? The others have good reason to be hostile, but I doubt that the Soviets feel very threatened. Oh yes, NATO is "hostile" as well, though it claims its expenditures are for defensive purposes. Strange how he believes the USSR but not NATO; it must be those 100,000 voluntary signatures on the Stockholm peace petition. Can your readers understand why his kind of simplistic reasoning—from the right or left—causes the "prevalent cynicism" he decries? I hope so.

MICHAEL F. NOONE JR.

Reply

I will grant Mr. Noone one point: the pay scale for a U.S. Army recruit should have read approximately $83 per week, not per month. However, with a Russian recruit receiving less than one ruble per week, this even better demonstrates the false figures when converting dollars to rubles. As Congressman Les Aspin states, "it pro-

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A NEW KIND OF COMMUNISM?

Khrushchev's famous speech denouncing the sins of Stalinism was a milestone in the history of the Communist party. Now the signs are that a comparably significant event is developing in the relations between the Soviet Union and the Communist parties of Western Europe. Using a personal rebuke of the leader of the Spanish Communist party as a platform, an authoritative editorial in the Soviet foreign affairs weekly *New Times* made a broad attack on what has come to be called Eurocommunism, saying that the concept of independent parties in Western Europe was designed to split the international Communist movement. This was the first major press attack on Western European Communist parties that has appeared in months and apparently foreshadows a direct attempt to counter what the Soviet sees as a dangerous heresy.

Eurocommunism is a term coined to cover the efforts of the Communist parties of France, Italy and Spain to achieve at least an appearance of independence and commitment to democratic methods in order to allay voter fears. Inevitably this effort carried with it the suggestion that these Communist parties would no longer look to the USSR for direction, that the Kremlin would no longer speak with total authority. A year ago in East Berlin, Moscow formally if reluctantly joined the other Communist parties in endorsing the right of each one to pursue an independent path. But the USSR has never been happy with a policy that did not clearly leave it No. 1, and it has been trying to reassert its supremacy ever since. Analysis of Eurocommunism, said the *New Times*, revealed that this phenomenon was designed to set the parties in Western Europe at odds with those in Eastern Europe and to discredit countries, primarily the Soviet Union, that

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have already established a new society. As for Spanish Communist leader Santiago Carrillo, the *New Times* said he "has lately spoken of our country and our party in terms that even the most reactionary writers do not often venture to use."

Thus Moscow signaled what seems destined to be a major new campaign to tighten ideological controls and compel total subservience by the Western parties. The reaction by these parties is therefore significant. Brushing aside the Soviet attack, Spanish party leader Carrillo compared it to "excommunication by the Holy Office." Questioned about Soviet motives, he said: "I think it is due to the fact that Stalinism is still very much alive. Stalinism—as a conception of the state, the dictatorship of one group—is still very much alive in the Soviet Union." And in a defiant counterattack, the official statement of the Spanish Communist party flatly rejected the Soviet criticisms and pledged itself to continue its Eurocommunism line of independence. "For Spain and for other capitalist societies with similar characteristics, the way called Eurocommunism offers the only valid alternative for the advance to socialism," said the official party reaction. Similar statements appeared in Italy and France, while the already independent Yugoslav party said that attacks on the Communist parties in Western Europe were inspired by "Stalinist conceptions."

It was against this background that Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance recently discussed the question of possible Communist electoral advances in Western Europe. Although the United States would prefer that democratic governments persist in the Western European nations, he said, he believed that Communist party election victories in that region might ultimately create more problems for the Soviet bloc than for the Atlantic alliance. It is easy to see his reasoning. No one knows, of course, whether the Communist parties of Western Europe would in fact live up to their present democratic pledges once they were in power—more particularly, once it looked as if they might lose that power. A Frenchman, Italian or Spaniard under a Communist regime might be no more free than a Russian today. But there is no doubt that a series of nationalistic Communist schisms would be highly embarrassing and dangerous to the USSR. Soviet claims to legitimacy as far as the countries of Eastern Europe are concerned, and even at home, are dependent on its being the great Motherland of socialism and the ultimate fount of socialist truth for all other Communist parties and countries throughout the world. The USSR cannot like the idea of a whole series of new Titos across the face of Europe, independent of Soviet control. When its ideological supremacy is threatened, the Soviet regime itself is bound to feel threatened—and rightly so.

In this growing controversy between the USSR and the Western Communist parties, what should be the role of the United States? Simply that of an outside observer —an interested observer, of course, but no more than that. The stakes are high. A real possibility exists that a further break-up in the once monolithic Communist structure is imminent, and this is too hopeful an opportunity for any rash interference on our part to be allowed to imperil it. We should remember that if Mr. Brezhnev views President Carter's stress on human rights as anti-Soviet psychological warfare, as he obviously does, the rise of Eurocommunism will seem even more of a threat to the continuance of the Soviet system. Emotionally involved as we must inevitably be, common sense demands that in this matter the United States maintain a calm distance and a low profile.

COMING: Margo Hammond writes from Rome on the possibilities of revising the Concordat of 1929 between the Vatican and Italy.

WASHINGTON REPORT

DOWN IN FLAMES

You could have knocked me down with a ten-billion-dollar cost-overrun. I never expected to see in my lifetime an American President say No to the military on anything more important than a duck-hunting trip at the expense of the arms merchants. Yet here was the all-time centerpiece of government military handouts scrapped with a single word at a brief press conference: Nope, we're not gonna make the B-1. Costs too much and we don't need it. For the first time since the arms race began in earnest, way back there with ole Doc Teller, the really unthinkable thought has been not merely thought but spoken, acted upon. The shovel has been hung back up on the Treasury wall and there'll be slim pickings at the military chuck wagon in the long cold winter ahead.

The Pardoner was first into print bemoaning the loss

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of all those megabucks for his friends and golfing companions in the death-merchant game and a curious bemoan it was: Carter, said Ford, was going to arm for war in the eighties, nineties and beyond with the weapons of the fifties, namely the B-52. Actually, of course, nothing could be more appropriate, since we are fighting a war of the fifties, the one in which we scared ourselves silly with our own shadows.

It's not supposed to work that way at all. What happens is that very soon after the inauguration of any American President, the Joint Chiefs of Staff show up at the Oval Office and do their number: I visualize it as an off-to-Buffalo entrance, the Chiefs handling their swagger sticks like bamboo canes, rolling their eyes, coming dramatically to a halt and chanting, "Do you want to be the first American President to lose a war?" That's supposed to hypnotize the occupant of the office who is then supposed to cry, "Yowsah, yowsah, how much do you want, will you take a check or does it have to be cash, I've got the wheelbarrow right here and the Treasury's next door, pick up the shovel and let's get at it."

The Chiefs did their number with the B-1, but Carter didn't have his lines down, blew them completely and ended up talking common sense. How could that have happened?

For two reasons, I think. In the first place, the Air Force really was deep into *hubris* when they came up with two magical mystery weapons at the same time, the B-1 and the Cruise missile, the latter cheap as these things go, the former a ceiling buster even without the overruns inescapable in military spending. The thought obviously was that they could have anything, all they had to do was name it; it never occurred to them that, given a choice, the normal purchaser of anything tends toward the cheaper. They'd been spoiled rotten and clearly expected to keep on being spoiled. If they'd had a brain in their heads, they'd have brought in the B-1 first and only after the fleet was built, the overruns met, the duck-hunting trips taken and reprimanded, the assistant secretaries for procurement moved back into the companies they gave the big bucks to, only then have announced the Cruise. It's a safe bet they won't do that again. Magical miracles of weaponry are going to happen one at a time from here on and don't you forget it.

The other reason for Carter's curious bout of common sense in arms spending is more interesting, fraught with hope for all of us save those of us who are major generals hoping for the second yardman, the weekend bartender. Unquestionably, the Joint Chiefs did their number; obviously it didn't work. The obvious reason it didn't work is that it isn't true anymore. No matter what he does, Carter cannot be the first American President to lose a war, at best only the sixth. Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Ford all lost a war, the same war as it happens, the American War Against the Indochinese. It just doesn't have the old-time wallop to ask, Do you want to be the *sixth* American President to lose a war? Why not? What the hell? Everybody's doing it.

That lost inhibition is the one genuine service to his country performed by Richard Nixon, who, typically, didn't even recognize it, didn't even admit it. All the same, admit it or not, he proved that Americans can lose a war and in so doing set us all free from the compulsion to keep on fighting, anywhere, any time, all the time, because we can lick any man in the house. Once we grant that we can lose a war, we don't have to keep running down the street, tire irons in hand, whenever we hear the thunk of fist on jaw. That realization is what distinguishes Jimmy Carter from Henry Kissinger, thank God. It may be a small advance, but it is an advance. Civilization lies straight ahead if we can just keep creeping.

Granted the Joint Chiefs will take their measures to avoid similar disasters in the future, what should the rest of us do to avoid being anymore the victims of the Joint Chiefs than is absolutely inescapable? Well, the first thing we ought to do is set up a Commie-Watch at Ambrose Light, Nag's Head, the Golden Gate and places like that. What we ought to do is keep announcing that so many days, weeks, months, years, have gone by since Carter Killed the B-1 and still the Soviet fleet hasn't hoved into view. Where are they, those godless atheists, are they trying to confuse us by not landing, attacking and seizing the country as they were supposed to do if we didn't decide to bankrupt ourselves on the B-1?

The Commie-Watch can conceivably be the best thing to happen to the country since ole Doc Teller. Whenever the new Doc Teller or the new Herman Kahn arises to say, Wow, wow, wow, the Russians are coming, the Russians are coming, if you don't feed the kitty and I mean Big, baby, the rest of us can say, Well, Herman baby, it is now three years, five months, eighteen days and six and a half hours since the Russians were supposed to land on Staten Island if we didn't build the B-1 and By George, they haven't made it out of the marge yet. What can have happened? Why don't we wait until they invade us because we didn't build the B-1 before we worry too much about what they'll do if we don't build the ZIP-14? Hey? Unthinkable. Poor old Herman.

One final aspect of the B-1 cries out for consideration. In addition to its many military virtues, that plane's program was so exquisitely orchestrated, as we say in Congressional lobbies, that bits and pieces of it were scheduled to be built in either 47 or 49 states, depending on your source. Personally I prefer 49 and am dying to find out which state the big buck boys thought they could safely ignore. Anyhow the working theory behind

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that distribution was, of course, the corralling of the Congress: would you vote against new jobs in your district? Not if you knew what was good for you.

Granted the soundness of the theory behind that, building the B-1 is still an awfully cumbersome way to give congressmen and -women handouts to hand out to their constituents. It's like burning down the house every time you want roast pig—or lamb, as the case may be. What we need instead is a recognized sliding scale, based on seniority, chairmanships held and the size of the state or district, each Member of Congress to receive annually the sum so arrived at as a personal discretionary fund. Naturally, the member will be free to give the money to any military supplier in the neighborhood and at first, no doubt, many will do that simply from habit. On the other hand, the congressman will be entirely free to make a loan or gift to his brother-in-law's dry cleaning business if that seems to him the most sensible and equitable way to increase jobs and spending power in the district.

There remains the problem, and there's no use pretending it's easy, of what to do with the hundreds of potentially unemployed, perhaps otherwise unemployable, Pentagon lobbyists who traditionally spend their days prowling the halls of Congress signing up members and important aides for free trips in those flying saloons the Air Force keeps for that purpose. They can't all become travel agents without making the country even more footloose than it is now, which is plenty. Fortunately, problems often bring their solutions with them and so it is here. Eventually, Members of Congress are going to choose, most of them at least, the obvious, easy and practical way to get the money into the hands of their constituents, namely put it in those hands. At that point, the unemployed lobbyists get back in the picture, shoveling out $20 bills from B-52s flying regular routes across the country, each bill tied to a label: You can thank your senator or congressman for this, you lucky stiff. With flight pay, of course.

FRANK GETLEIN

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CHURCH-STATE IN GREECE

CASANOVA'S LAW

The Greek Parliament might soon enact a divorce bill which could cause deep fissures between the government and the Orthodox Church. Traditionally church and state have been virtually inseparable and many Greeks believe that Orthodoxy and Hellenism are one. Although 98 percent of the Greek populace adheres to Orthodoxy, the pressures of modern life are driving a wedge between the people and their spiritual leaders.

Church and state grew up together, at least in part, because of the 400 years of Turkish occupation. After the split between Constantinople and Rome in 1054 the Greek Patriarch ruled in the Byzantine Empire as first among equals in the Orthodox hierarchy. When the Turks captured Constantinople in 1453 the patriarch became "ethnarch," the political as well as religious leader of the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire. Archbishop Makarios in Cyprus serves as a living holdover from that tradition—as the patriarch of the Cypriot Church he was the natural selection as the new nation's first president in 1960. After Greece won independence in 1830 a king was imported from Bavaria, since there was no one political leader, and the Church assumed many civic functions, particularly those relating to family matters such as marriage and divorce. Even as recently as the period following the German occupation in World War II the archbishop served as regent for a year.

The Constitution of 1974, implemented after the overthrow of the military regime, guarantees freedom of religion and safeguards the self-government of the Orthodox Church but church and state remain firmly intertwined. Religion is taught in public schools, priests are civil servants paid out of taxes, the archbishop administers oaths of political office and the President presides at every major religious feast. And these are merely outward manifestations of the tradition of unity— religious customs thread their way through the pattern of everyday life. So divisions caused by the divorce bill strike at deeply rooted elements of Greek society.

Divorce and remarriage are permitted up to three times in the Greek Church, but the "wronged" party must request the dissolution of the marriage. Since in this society that almost always means the woman, there are hundreds of cases of women refusing to give their husbands divorces because they fear the economic consequences. The new law would make it possible for couples who have been separated for six years or more to obtain a divorce no matter which partner seeks it. Even then it would not be an "automatic" divorce, as the Church claims, but each case would be decided individually and women and children in need of support would be protected. Supporters of the bill, some of whom are government ministers talking about their own marital status, say the current situation leads to social prob-

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lems. They point to families where men have been living with other women for decades—such as the couple who have been living together for 53 years whose children and grandchildren have no legal rights because the first wife won't grant a divorce.

The proposed bill came to Parliament last November after two years of study and then it was unanimously approved by the Justice Committee. Since then the Church, in conjunction with the highly organized lobby of abandoned women—who dubbed the proposal "Casanova's Law"—has been trying to prevent the bill from coming to the floor. Church leaders threaten to refuse remarriage to persons divorced under the new law. If they do they could further erode their power because the government might then be forced to enact a law allowing for civil marriage, which currently doesn't exist in Greece. The Holy Synod has called civil marriage "contrary to Greek Christian traditions" but many people here feel the populace is rapidly becoming more liberal than the Church.

Greeks are drifting away from their strong ties with the Church for two main reasons: the natural evolution of life styles as the nation becomes more urbanized; and the unnatural ruptures between priests and people caused by the role of the Church throughout the military dictatorship. As Greeks flock to the cities—one-third of the nation's population now lives in Athens—they leave behind the village customs that tied them to religious practices. Sunday church-going is no longer the major social event of the week, and no one in Athens knows whether you go or not. If you do you are likely to be greeted by an uneducated priest who has not begun to deal with the problems faced by city-dwellers. An unpleasant six-day work week in an overcrowded city also argues against staying in town on Sunday, so most Athenians head for the mountains or beach instead of the local parish, although some listen to the liturgy on cassettes cleverly marketed by the Church. Village society dictates observance of Church rules such as the strict Lenten fast or the prohibition against new mothers leaving the house for forty days after childbirth. In the city they're easy to avoid. These trends are common in societies changing from traditional to modern ways but they have never been forced into the public arena here before the open debate on the divorce bill.

The Greek Orthodox Church has been quick to recognize human frailty. It sees its teaching as the perfection for mankind to seek, not as an expectation of daily behavior. Thus issues which have caused such dissent in the Catholic Church, primarily birth control and abortion, have never created a problem here. The Church is officially against both, and established orphanages to try to discourage them, but they are both widely practiced by church members. As the archbishop's spokesman put it, "Here we know pain and sin and know it's impossible to be without sin. Life is an attempt to better ourselves." If abortion or birth control laws had ever come to Parliament, the Church might have been forced to take a stand against the practices of most of its members. But here church and state would unite because of the official view that Greece is underpopulated. Recognizing that the two-child family is here to stay, the Church has been wise enough not to undermine its moral authority by insisting on strict adherence to all its teachings.

Moral authority has suffered a breakdown, however, as a result of the seven years of military rule. During that time the Church kept quiet about the abrogation of rights by the colonels, and about their use of torture against political prisoners. The junta replaced members of the Holy Synod with bishops of its own choice without any objection from the rest of the hierarchy. In spreading its own puritan ethic the regime used the Church to pronounce the "Greece of Christian Greeks." When students occupying the Polytechnic University asked then Archbishop Ieronymous to negotiate between them and the government they were ignored, and the massacre of students by police followed. As a result young people today view the Church as yet another wing of the establishment and discredit it along with the monarchy and the military. In defense of the Church's passivity some argue that it has no tradition of resistance against Greek regimes but only against foreign oppressors. Others reply that Greeks won't accept an authority that offers itself only when there is no danger involved. The Education Ministry's General Director of Religious Affairs, Vlassios Phidas, described the loss of moral suasion: "The Church was silent for seven years when the Greek people were going through a crisis of conscience."

In an attempt to regain its authority and answer the needs of the urban dweller and the young Greek, the Church moves cautiously. Religious leaders recognize "disharmonies" between the people and the priests but, as with everything in Greek society, a delicate balance must be maintained between the forces of change and the forces of conservatism. Villagers would react strongly against any radical reforms in the Church—they want their religion to remain comfortable and recognizable. It is in response to them that priests in Greece maintain the black robes, high hats, long hair and beards that make their appearance so forbidding. As Mr. Phidas said of the villagers, "If they see a priest in a suit and another in a robe, they believe that the holier one is the one in the robe." Any change causes disruption—when the modern calendar was adopted in 1922 it created a schism that still causes occasional demonstrations at monasteries on Mt. Athos. The divorce bill might also be a case of moving too fast; some Church and government officials believe that a referendum on the new proposal would meet with defeat. But others disagree. They argue that a more modern Greece, mov-

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ing toward union with Europe, requires a more modern church. If the Church is willing to relinquish some of its power, as in the case of marriage and divorce, it won't be stripped of it. If it is willing to adjust the "disharmonies," then Hellenism and Greek Orthodoxy might once again be one. COKIE ROBERTS

(Cokie Roberts, a previous contributor, is an American newspaper and radio journalist based in Athens.)

Papabile

Cardinal Benelli

In making Giovanni Benelli a cardinal, Pope Paul has not quite designated his successor. But he has ensured at least that Benelli plays a key role in the next papal election. As substitute to the Secretary of State for the past decade, Benelli has become known to all cardinals. Now, as cardinal, he can participate in the next papal election. Few others in the cardinalate college can rival his personal knowledge of other cardinals and familiarity with Vatican policy.

If the election were held tomorrow, Benelli is both too young (56) and with too little pastoral experience to be a likely successor to Paul VI. But he would certainly be an influential figure within the conclave.

It is expected that, early in the new year, Pope Paul will make Benelli president of the Italian episcopacy, a post presently held by Cardinal Antonio Poma, archbishop of Bologna, who does not enjoy good health. When the present Secretary of State, the French Cardinal Jean Villot, turns 75 in 3 years time Benelli could well return to the Vatican as Secretary of State. If Paul were still pope, he could then succeed him. And he is also young enough to succeed Paul's successor. Obviously he is a man to watch.

The June 27 consistory, the sixth of Paul's reign, was held solely for Benelli, in the opinion of Vatican sources. He was appointed Archbishop of Florence, a cardinalate see, but he could have waited for elevation to the cardinalate as could the others who shared the honor: the African Bernadin Gantin, head of the Pontifical Justice and Peace Commission; Joseph Ratzinger, the theologian who has been made Archbishop of Munich; the Dominican Luigi Ciappi, theologian of the papal household; and the apostolic administrator of Prague, Frantisek Tomasek.

Paul probably wanted to avoid a repetition of his own experience: when Pius XII made him Archbishop of Milan, after he had been Substitute to the Secretary of State, he did not make him a cardinal. Consequently he could not participate in the election after Pius XII's death. This seems a more likely explanation of Benelli's immediate elevation to the cardinalate than that Paul VI intends to retire on September 25, when he reaches 80, or that he feels death is close.

The consistory, then, according to Vatican opinion, was made by a Substitute for a Substitute just as was Paul's 1967 reform of the Church's central administration, the Roman Curia. This centralized power within the Secretariat of State which became a kind of Prime Minister's Department, not only coordinating but supervising all the other Ministries (Congregations, Commissions, etc.).

The key man in the Secretariat was not so much the Secretary (Villot) as Benelli, largely because of his extraordinary dynamism which earned him the nickname of Monsignor Efficiency. (Balding Benelli is stockily built, moves like a rugby player and relaxes by driving fast.) Many curialists were furious to find that Benelli changed their expert recommendations. For instance, the Commission for the Revision of Canon Law might find its recommendations, fruit of a year's work, abruptly amended after Benelli had handed them to some of his advisors. His abrasive manner also got many backs up. Benelli is a Tuscan with all their brusqueness. As Substitute he was accused of throttling initiatives deriving from the Vatican Council.

But although Benelli is a disciplinarian in internal church affairs, on social issues he is not a reactionary. At least when Vatican representative in Spain, he irritated the Franco regime by recommending that socially active priests be made bishops.

He was born one of three children of middle-class parents in a small hamlet, Poggiole di Vernio, near Pistoia, Tuscany. After postgraduate studies at the Jesuit Gregorian University in Rome, he entered the Vatican diplomatic corps in 1948. For two years he was private secretary to the future Pope Paul who at that time was Substitute (or Deputy) to the Secretary of State.

Benelli served in the Vatican diplomatic corps in Dublin, Paris, and Rio de Janeiro before his Madrid posting. After it, he was Vatican Observer at UNESCO in Paris and in 1966 was sent on his last posting before becoming Substitute: pro-nuncio to West Africa. He speaks excellent French and Spanish, good English and Portuguese and gets by in German. Diplomats accredited to the Vatican praise his competence.

In the Vatican, he was totally indifferent to the antipathies he aroused. Will he maintain this attitude in Florence which has always been a turbulent diocese? In the Vatican years ago, he received a delegation from the dissident Florentine parish Isolotto. Among other things, Benelli virtually told them not to throw the penny catechism at him. In Florence Benelli may find some waiting for him who will match him in brusqueness.

DESMOND O'GRADY

(Desmond O'Grady is an Australian journalist long resident in Rome.)

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ON THE ROAD

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

"Without art we do not know ourselves or anyone else. Only art penetrates what pride, passion, intelligence and habit erect on all sides—the seeming realities of this world."—Saul Bellow in his acceptance speech for the Nobel prize.

There is a zany quality to my life these days since I am engaged in the questionable process known as "pushing a book." I have, as one unfeeling interviewer put it, "committed a novel." [*Circles: A Washington Story*—The Editors], and am obligated by my contract to do a "reasonable" amount of promotion.

No one seems to know what a reasonable amount is. In these days of conglomerates no author seems to be very clear as to how many books the publisher wants him or her to sell. None of the simplicities of the commerce of another day seems to apply; there is a mysterious ratio of books to tax losses, to pulpwood purchases, to heaven knows what. For all the writer knows, the book is a "loss leader—five to one store, one to a customer."

Publicity directors may care about "pushing the book" but warehousers seem to be totally indifferent. Nine times out of ten I, like many another writer, have been met at talk shows by a hostile or distressed producer who says that the book only arrived that morning, no one with the show has had time to read it, but that they will ask some "related" questions. In my case, since I come from Washington, related questions range from the most personal questions about my private life to ones about Rosalynn Carter's South American trip or the doings of Tongsun Park, suspect South Korean operator on the Washington scene.

Experienced interviewers have a way of handling the problem. The trick is to say, "Ah, I am glad you asked me that—it reminds me of the scene in my book in which Jeff—he's the TV commentator, you know—is having lunch in the Senate dining room . . ." and away you go, hoping wildly that you may interest at least one reader out there. More often than not, however, you have annoyed the interviewer—who has already assured you that he never reads novels (taxi drivers tell you the same thing on the way to the studio)—and he or she bores in, sure that *somehow* you are going to break down and admit to *something* about Tongsun Park.

A polite, sometimes not so polite, duel develop (s). Then abruptly he raises a hand, stops you in midsentence as you try to expatiate on fiction as distinguished from nonfiction, the true novel as distinguished from the *roman à clef*, holds the book up to the camera, takes a quick look to be sure of the title, repeats it, thanks you and off you go, wondering if the surely confused audience can distinguish between your book and those written in incarceration by the perpetrators of Watergate—or will want to.

Despite the hazards, I have taken to the road with a will because I enjoy the new impressions, the behind-the-scenes look at the media, the encounters with other writers, the look of America on the move in Chicago, Boston, New York, Minneapolis—the occasional rare new friend. Traveling for my last book I shared a network panel one night with the author of a sex manual and with Truman Capote, the latter complete with straw hat, lisp and waspish comments on Washington, offered in a friendly effort to make my segment "better television." The next show was with Pat Boone, positive, upbeat, confident in his rebirth and the stern requirements of literal Bible Christianity. It was a bewildering swing along the gamut of those who set America's values.

As I travel this time I am becoming increasingly concerned about the way in which most of the value-setters are more and more indifferent to, if not hostile to, art in its literary form. When they say they do not read novels, they also mean that they do not read drama, poetry, short story, essay, even biography in its literary form. Those charged with selecting prospective Nieman fellows say that it is a rare young journalist these days whose leisure reading includes anything beyond the latest investigative book, or fast-paced reportage disguised as fiction. No Trollope, no Dickens, no Galsworthy, no Faulkner, not even Wilder for them—or even Saul Bellow, whom I have quoted above.

Henry Fairlie has written recently that we in America have lost our common sources of allusion. It is the rare American who can respond to the names of characters like Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer, let alone those from *Moby Dick* or the Bible. If so, is it not true that, as Bellow continued in his speech, we as a people have lost sight of "another reality, the genuine one. . . ? This other reality is always sending us hints, which, without art, we can't receive. . . . The true impressions, our persistent intuitions, will, without art, be hidden from us and we will be left with nothing but a 'terminology for practical ends which we falsely call life' (Proust)."

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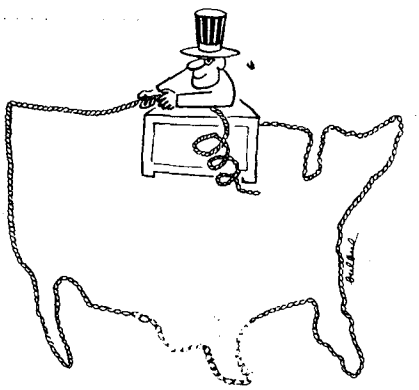
THE AMERICAN DREAM

JURGEN MOLTMANN

Translated by M. Douglas Meeks



Without hope in community, the American identity would dissolve

I

The American Passion

After the horrors of the Vietnam war, Watergate and the CIA plots, Jimmy Carter has appeared on the political scene in Washington like an angel of light out of the depths of the people. Dominated by religion and morality, his campaign showed that the old hopes of the American people are directed toward the unknown populists and Baptists from the South. They represent the hope for a rebirth of the nation out of the spirit of its founders. Thus, the President said in his inaugural address: "Two centuries ago our nation's birth was a milestone in the long quest for freedom, but the bold, brilliant dream which excited the founders of this nation still awaits its consummation. I have no new dream to set forth today, but rather urge a fresh faith in the old dream."

Much has been written about the political ideology of the United States. How much of the biblical, particularly the Old Testament, symbology dominates this political ideology is a matter that has also been extensively investigated. That the political power of biblical faith experiences and hopes remains unbroken by the secularization process, was proved again in the 1976 campaign. Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans could avoid the religious archetypes of the people. Here, much more was at stake than "*Realpolitik*." In order to acknowledge the campaign's promises in the face of the underestimated passion of the people, even hard-boiled bureaucrats in Washington had to become soft. Thus, for non-Americans to understand the political *ideas* of the United States, it is all the more important to grasp why they are collectively called "the American dream" and to recognize their religious roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition of biblical hopes.

For Europeans there exists a simple beginning point for understanding the American dream: before there was an *American dream* there was *America as a dream*. But "America as a dream" was dreamed in Europe. It was and is the dream of freedom for every human being: the land of unlimited possibilities and of justice without privileges. This was the dream of the politically oppressed, the religiously persecuted, the socially humiliated and the racially defamed. "America as dream" was also, to be sure, *Wanderlust*, gold fever and Karl May romanticism. But it was in every case a European dream which motivated the emigration.

The *American dream* is basically nothing other than the transferral of the European dream of America to American soil. It is the fulfillment and the disappointment, the continuation and the reshaping of the European dream of America. Consequently, the American dream did not represent a hope limited to America but had universal significance for all people who sought America as the fulfillment of the hope for freedom and justice. For this reason, on the other hand, an international discussion of the American dream is not

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an illegitimate meddling of "foreigners" in the "internal affairs" in the United States. Yet, precisely at this point there lies already the first ambivalence of the American dream: the ambiguity between universalism and particularism, between messianism and Americanism.

This nation entered world history, two hundred years ago with all of the passions of political messianism. It lives from the power of the vision to be "a new nation conceived in liberty" (Abraham Lincoln).

It was not poetry but pure realism which motivated Roosevelt to say in 1933: "When there is no vision the people perish." With this observation the New Deal Program began. Because there was no tradition or common past which united them, a multitude of immigrants, slaves and oppressed minorities in an unlimited, even if certainly not uninhabited, continent could only find social community and the unity of the state in the future-oriented religion of political messianism. Without the will for a common future this nation would certainly have been destroyed and even today would no doubt disintegrate. Without hope in community, the American identity would dissolve into its old ethnic identities. The Vietnam war led to dangerous internal disintegrations. Thus, almost every president begins his administration with a confirmation of the messianic ideals of the political religion of this people.

In this relatively short history the American people has experienced both the good fortune and the misery of political messianism. Through its dream it became united, active and successful as no other people. But it has also suffered from its dream, because the promise which is deeply embedded in it can neither be fulfilled nor discarded. The ambivalences which are found in the American dream also become plain when it conflicts with American reality.

The dream of freedom, equality and happiness for all human beings—"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness"—is a *human dream*. It can only be fulfilled by humanity as a whole. As long as human beings are alienated from each other by class, caste, race and nation; as long as they live against each other and not for each other, this dream cannot be fulfilled. It also cannot be fulfilled as an *American dream*; for as a nation, a world power and a culture, America must take part in the alienation, separation and oppression of human beings. The human dream cannot be Americanized without being falsified through the ideological self-justification of the American empire and the free enterprise of the multinational corporations. As a human dream, the American dream is a true and necessary one. As an American dream, however, it makes the human dream impossible.

Involved here basically is a contradiction which is similar to that of Soviet ideology: the "establishment of socialism in one country" destroys through race identification the socialism or humanity. "Socialism" is falsified through the self-justifying terms of Russian hegemony. If the United States understands itself as "this nation under God" (Abraham Lincoln) or as the "champion of democracy," then ambiguities inevitably arise. Was the Vietnam war really executed for the freedom of the Vietnamese people or for the United States' own interests? At the time, one could hear both claims. The humanization of the American dream would make the United States a blessing for other peoples. But the Americanization of the human dream also makes the United States a burden for other peoples. Thus, the test question for United States foreign policy will be: will the "moral conscience" (Jimmy Carter) be realized in the demand for liberation and the respect for human rights in Latin America, Asia and Africa, or will the interests of American big business be further served through the ideology of "national security" (through the National Security Council) at the cost of other peoples?

II

America as Promise: Paradise or Doomsday?

White Americans are an immigrant people. Voluntarily or involuntarily they left their homeland in Europe and followed up a promise. What they left behind, they cast away as the hopeless "Old World." What they sought, they greeted as the hopeful "New World." What they all carried with them, however, was no new idea and also no different system but simply the promise of open space. It promised to each the "unlimited possibilities" for the fulfillment of his or her wishes. "Freedom in space," as Sydney Mead calls it, was the clarion call of America.

Whatever else the American dream might be, at its core it is directed toward superabundance: unlimited possibilities, unlimited freedoms, unlimited powers. Of course nothing on earth is without limits, but there are always new fronts on which one can glimpse the boundless sea of possibilities. The first "front" of the American dream was the open space which stretched westwardly across the continent. For one hundred years the call to go West was the call to freedom, i.e., freedom in space. The second "front" of the American dream was the natural resources and power which became available for technology. The ability to fulfill almost all desires through technical fabrication was, for another one hundred years, the call to freedom, i.e., the freedom of power. And now, as one can hear in California, the third front of the American dream is opening in the unlimited possibilities of the soul. The discovery of unused human potential is inspiring the

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human potential movement and the personal growth movement. On all three fronts America does not awaken any new hopes, but it promises the fulfillment of all existing hopes.

"All things possible"—that is the American promise. It is an ambiguous promise as long as human beings are ambiguous creatures who not only have life-wishes but also death-wishes. This can be rather clearly recognized in the two faces of American eschatology.

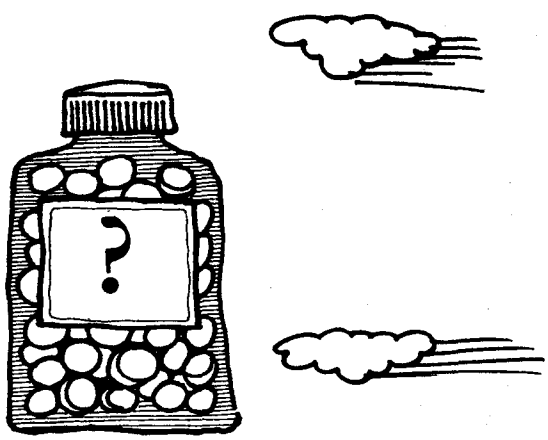
No other country on earth—with the possible exception of Russia—has so intensively disseminated *messianic eschatology* as the United States. It has done this theology in its churches and synagogues as well as through political ideology in public acts. By "messianism" we mean here a future hope which is combined with faith in its own realizability on earth. This messianism was fermenting in the Great Awakening, the democratic movement, the Social Gospel Movement, and the Civil Rights Movement. It also lies at the heart of normal American pragmatism: "If it can't be done, it's not worth thinking about." Americans thus transform every hope into a *program*, every opinion into a *message*, every task into a *mission*, every struggle for the good into a *crusade*, and every new experience into a *resurrection*. Religion exists, therefore, to be realized. This is its meaning.

But no other country on earth has at the same time so penetratingly disseminated *apocalyptic eschatology*. The United States has done this through theology in hundreds of sects as well as through doomsday prophets in bestsellers. By apocalyptic we mean here a future anxiety which is combined with faith in the realizability of its worst fears. This apocalyptic ferments generally in fundamentalism and particularly in those missionary groups and crusaders which, for a hundred years, have made the world unsafe. But it is also to be found in the "ideology of national security" with which the world is plunged into permanent civil war. In Europe both forms of eschatology are perceived to be typically American. Are they alternatives or do they both live out of the same basis?

At first glance the two eschatologies have nothing to do with each other. Messianic eschatology sounds *optimistic*. Hope is to be fulfilled not only after this age, but immedately, here and now. There is a life before death? Today is the day of salvation! Therefore, I want my freedom—now! This hope is fulfilled by God, by "God with us," and then also by one "nation under God." The truly pious will not be denied by God.

It is the conviction of messianic eschatology that the time of fulfillment is already beginning as never before, and that it is beginning with us as with no others in the world. Messianism in America is constantly combined with millennialism. Where else and among whom else should the "thousand-year reign" be inaugurated, in which Christ and the beings are to reign over the devil and all enemies? If the time of fulfillment is beginning, then what is impossible for other human beings is now made possible.

This optimism is a dream from which one must be awakened in order to become historically conscious and shrewd. Even "with God" and Jimmy Carter the human being is no guiltless creature. In open space the human being fulfills not only his or her best hopes, but also his or her worst impulses. In order to awake from the dreams of collective guilt, a nation should know that this is even more the case under God. The phrase, "All things are possible," in itself means only the frenzy of power. Unfortunately the open space and the unlimited possibilities say absolutely nothing about whether this spatial, technical and spiritual power is used for fulfilling or destroying human life. But, if one is to be awakened from the dream of individual guilt and leave the collective delirium behind, then one must hold all the more firmly to the messianic dream. How otherwise could one resist destruction and will life against the threats of death?! What else beside this dream of "life, freedom and happiness" can give ambiguous human beings orientation and courage for life, freedom and happiness?!



On the contrary, apocalyptic eschatology sounds *pessimistic*. It is fear, not hope. Negative experiences of the present are gathered, bewailed and hysterically escalated until one recognizes in them the threatening presentiments of the global end of the world. Time has also become short here. The end of the world is coming, not after this time, but already in it. There is death before life! Today can be the day of calamity. Therefore, save yourself, whoever can! But can one save oneself when the doomsday is assured and already coming? There is scarcely an apocalyptic terror of the soul without a spark of hope: "a remnant is converted" and saved. It is to build the kingdom of the good world after the destruction of the evil world.

Just as messianic eschatology anticipates the kingdom of God in democracy and salvation in the earthly happiness of the greatest possible number of human beings, apocalyptic eschatology anticipates the judgment of God

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in the total criticism of the present. It anticipates the eschatological separation of the sheep and goats in the decision for Christ against the anti-Christs. It anticipates hell in the destruction of the world. Whoever is declared the phantom of the "anti-Christs," whether they be the Catholics, the liberals, the socialists, or the Communists, are always the current enemies of religion, the state, or the class. In former times natural catastrophes such as earthquakes, pestilence and starvation were made into "signs of the end" in order to engender a belief marked by apocalyptic anxiety. Now, unpleasant political events are used for that purpose. Liberation movements in Africa, socialist movements in Asia, but also the destruction of democracy in Chile and South Korea, or the undesirous conclusion of the Vietnam war fill the role quite nicely. The apocalyptists become dangerous because they support the very powers that cause these signs.

From where do these two faces of American eschatology come? *Messianic eschatology* stems from the exodus story of the Old Testament. The exodus from slavery in Egypt into the freedom of the promised land was the root experience of Israel. The memory of liberation also ruled the hope of the prophets in the new messianic exodus. The Puritan pilgrim fathers experienced and interpreted as an exodus their emigration from European oppressions into the freedom of the American wilderness. Untold numbers who came after them entered into and experienced emigration according to this archetype. The exodus motif was universalized by the Pilgrim Fathers. Since then, it has become the motif of wandering and mobility. From the Pilgrim Fathers it was transferred to the advancing pioneer frontier in the West and to the liberation struggle of the black slaves. From both, it came into the Women's Liberation Movement. Out of the ideology of the United States it is today wandering into Latin American liberation theology. This modern history of traditions framed into the exodus motif is going far beyond Christianity. Traces of it are also found in Maoism. If it is correct that its paganization and its general politicizing stem from the Puritan Revolution in England, then there lies hidden in the modern spreading of this motif a certain "Americanization" of the world.

Apocalyptic eschatology can also essentially be traced back to the exodus of the Old Testament. Pharoah and his army had to be destroyed so that Israel could be free. The destruction of the anti-divine powers also belongs to Israel's root experience. The apocalyptists projected this experience into the future. The future, ultimate exodus struggle is the final struggle of God against his enemies. This struggle can come to an end only with the victory of good and defeat of evil. In apocalypticism the Pharoah of history becomes the anti-Christ, the beast from the abyss, the whore Babylon. The world becomes the great battlefield of God on which Michael and his angels struggle against the dragon and its seed. The saints are the soldiers of God. They are engaged in permanent war and crusade against evil. Out of such apocalyptic representations of the end struggle, without which there is to be no exodus into freedom, is born the idea of "total warfare." The end struggle can be concluded only with complete conversion or the complete destruction of all evil. Parallel to this is the method of "psychological combat" against the internal enemy.

The exodus motif and the end struggle motif have a common root in Old Testament memory and expectations. Today, however, they appear, especially in the United States, principally in opposition to one another. In the church, the anti-Communist apocalyptists stand over against the liberal improvers of the world, while in politics, the civil war ideology of "national security" stands over against the civil rights ideology of the liberation of the people in politics.

Theologically, this ambivalence of the American dream can be dissolved only if messianism and apocalypticism are resolutely Christianized. The question of the costs of the liberation of the people remains open in the Old Testament: must Pharoah, alien peoples, or part of Israel be sacrificed, or does the God who liberates take upon himself the suffering which is necessary? For Christians, only the recognition of the suffering of God in the Cross of Christ makes eschatology unambiguous and hopeful. Without voluntary suffering for others, no power becomes the authority of life. Without readiness for sacrifice, America remains an ambiguous promise.

III

America as Covenant: Blessing or Curse?

America's political contribution to world history is rightly regarded as *democracy*. The United States has twice entered world wars "to rescue the world for democracy." Democracy means the rule of the people as opposed to a state of ruling authorities; the state of law as opposed to the state of power. It is a political system in which power cannot be used without a common agreement of law. Truth, not the authority of rule, shall make the laws. But these agreements of law by which the use of political power is limited and controlled go back to the religious idea of the covenant.

In his book *The New England Mind*, Perry Miller shows that this nation was created out of the covenant which its citizens formed with God and one another. *America as covenant* arose politically, namely, out of the free and voluntary union of its citizens through the practice of justice and the preservation of their freedom. The United States is the "covenanted nation." Not political power but rather the Constitution according to which the country must direct itself, has authority. The

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covenant is sacred, because contracts must be kept for the sake of the honor and credibility of the partners: *Pacta sunt servanda*. Accordingly, morality becomes the foundation of politics.

The political idea of the covenant has a theological prehistory in the Calvinist tradition. Beginning with Calvin and John Knox and continuing with Olevian, Cocceius, Althusius and Hugo Grotius, the human relationship to God as well as to society was repeatedly understood not as pure rule but as a convenant based on mutual freedom. This was so because the Calvinist fathers had in mind a *two-fold covenant* established on the Old Testament model: God makes the *first covenant* with the people whom he elects and whom he has freed from slavery. This religious covenant is at once the constitution of the common life and the guarantee of the covenant partners' rights of freedom. The *second covenant* is the contract of rule. In the presence of God the people make this covenant with their king (or the government). The covenant of rule thus presupposes the covenant of the people and can be made only within its boundaries. If a ruler breaks the contract of rule or if a contract of rule is executed which is in opposition to the covenant of the people with God, the offender must be removed in the name of God. This form of constitutional democracy emerged out of the conceptuality of the religious covenant. It remains vital only so long as the people and the individual citizens lay claim in a crisis to their right to resistance, and for the sake of their conscience (as in the case of Daniel Ellsberg), hold fast to the truth that "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God."

The democratic covenant realizes and preserves freedom. Political power is not a natural event to which one is simply subjected as to the sun and rain (cf. Melancthon in the "Apology for the Augsburg Confession"), but rather a moral task of the whole community. To many Europeans who for centuries have been used to the arrogance of power, the moral claims of American politics seem dishonest and mendacious. Yet, it is better to have politics with a bad conscience than politics without any conscience at all!

American democracy arose along with the American free churches. It can evidently be taken over by other peoples only if at the same time the concept of "voluntary religion" is legalized. State and national churches nowhere create a climate which is friendly to democracy —quite the opposite. The presuppositions for free churches are two in number. 1) Personal freedom of choice and personal responsibility. Those whose religion is predefined for them through tradition, family and state do not learn this freedom. 2) The right to the formation of the congregation through voluntary union. Those whose church is rigidly ordered by infant baptism, the residential district and state do not experience the free zone of community. Democracy presupposes citizens who have come of age not only morally but also religiously. The "free state," that is, the democratic state of law, demands a "free church," that is, a voluntary congregation of the people of God. Conversely, a "free church" demands a "free state."

But freedom of choice presupposes real liberation precisely in that area in which choice is to be encountered as received responsibility. Here lies the unsolved problem of political democracy.

For Israel, the covenant with God and with one another became possible only on the basis of the experienced liberation from slavery. Exodus precedes covenant.

The famous covenant sermon which John Winthrop preached in 1630 before landing in the new world concludes with the summons of Moses: "I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live." The freedom for this decision of the covenant had brought forth the exodus from Europe.

The enlightened fathers of the American Constitution began with the concept that all human beings are by nature free. They did not take into consideration the factual slavery of the blacks, the Indians, the poor and the women. Rather, they presupposed an abstract freedom to which, of course, only a small elite could actually lay claim. In this assumption lies not only the danger of ideological camouflaging of the real conditions but also an excessive demand on human beings. If human beings who are enslaved in the economic, social, political, or religious dimensions are confronted with the covenant call to decision: "Choose life or death, blessing or curse," then the covenant will become a curse for them and lead them to death, for they are not able to choose in freedom. It is simply not possible to maintain "America as covenant" on the basis of an unimagined equality of human beings and an abstract freedom of choice imputed to all. History gives ample proof: "The covenant is broken." Very little of the religious idea of the covenant is left over in the democratic consciousness. What remains leads the shadow existence of what we call today "civil religion." Without inner renewal the democratic institutions of the covenant remain empty and are quickly filled up with the bureaucrats of administration who take over the decisions from the citizens and rob them of freedom. The external covenant of democracy requires and yearns for a renewal of the internal covenant, that is, the "religion of freedom."

Thus it is becoming all the more clear that "America as Covenant" cannot continue to exist without "America as exodus." Only a liberated people can be a "land of the free." But only the oppressed and restless human beings are interested in liberation and exodus from slavery. America can expect its renewal as covenant and democracy from them: from the blacks, the Indians,

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the poor, the women, for they still have their exodus in freedom before them. Only economic and social liberation will fill political democracy with new power. Insofar as the "American Revolution" proceeds on this way, it repeats and fulfills nothing other than the promise with which it first set out.

IV

America as Experiment: Success or Catastrophe?

For many people throughout the world America represents the *great experiment*. Through their traditions of thousands of years most of the other nations understand themselves as a piece of nature. Culture and nature have become a unity. Every present is burdened with the past. Everywhere one sees the remnants of past times. Next to one of these nations America appears as an artifact. In a very short time after its independence the United States was constructed out of the will and the reason of immigrants. One needs only to compare an American city with a European city in order to observe that "city" is no translation of "polis," "citta," or "Stadt" but designates a new phenomenon. One needs only to compare the farmland in the Middle West with Asian farming villages to see that here also a new relationship with nature has emerged. American cultivation and management of land is an experiment with the possibilities of space, of which we spoke at the beginning. The city is an experiment with the possibilities of society.

In the land of unknown possibilities one must experiment in order to probe its latent energies and to discover the best possibilities. The experimental lifestyle corresponds to the open environment. It is fascinated by the realm of possibility and is itself fascinating. As Boorstin has said, "America lived with the constant belief that something better might turn up. Americans were glad enough to keep things growing and moving. When before had men got so much faith in the unexpected?" (*Americans: National Experience,* p. 1).

Life as experiment means, try it again and again, the future is open for you and the future is gracious to the virtuous. *Life as experiment* means not to accept any piece of reality as final and closed but to go forward in the dynamic of the provisional. *Life as experiment* is the trial and error method. History as experiment is the challenge and response method. From its very inception America was a great experiment, and up to the present day it understands itself as a Great Experiment with nature, society, the future, with God. If there is an American lifestyle which is spread throughout the world today, it is this shape of life which is open to the future, enamored of risk and experimental.

But one must pay a high price for this *life as experiment*. According to sociological investigations it is the dearest dream of every American to own his own house on his own land, and on the national average every American moves at least every five years. Forty-million Americans per year change their address. As John Steinbeck set out on his *Travels with Charlie* he saw in the eyes of his neighbor something he was to discover everywhere in the nation: "A burning desire to go, to move, to get underway, any place away from Here. They spoke quietly of how they wanted to go someday, to move about, free and unanchored, not toward something, but away from something" (p. 10). But in order to be a person in movement, one must cut off one's roots and live without relationships. The fascinating mobility of the American legs costs the bitter rootlessness of the American soul. Vance Packard has described this *Nation of Strangers* with an abundance of statistics. He found: "While the footlooseness of Americans as pioneers was a source of vitality and charm, several of the new forms that the accelerating rootlessness of Americans is taking should be the cause for alarm." He has thereby overlooked, I suspect, the fact that modern rootlessness is the consequence of the old footlooseness and the necessary price for an experimental lifestyle. As the Great Experiment, America can only be a society of torn roots.

Life as experiment costs not only this price of loneliness in one's own life but also the sacrifice of many other lives. An experiment is only an attempt. One must be able to repeat an experiment. One should, therefore, take into account the failures. One can learn from errors in order to try again from scratch. When one transfers this experimental attitude to real life, one can immediately see its limits. *Medical experiments* on the living, which can lead to life or death and which can leave behind irreparable damage, are morally suspect. It would be better for politicians to abstain from *political experiments*. Was Vietnam merely a *military experiment?* What about the dead then? One cannot experiment with catastrophe.

Making an experiment means leaving everything open and in suspension. But when it comes to a matter of life and death, then the point of no return has been reached. Then it is no longer a question of an experiment but an emergency. Death is not an experiment, for one cannot make a new beginning with it. Therefore, life is also not an experiment, for it is once for all.

Not to be able to live, to love and to die with one's whole heart but to be able only to experiment with life, love and death is the kind of detached lifestyle to which one is forced by the messianism with which America has entered the stage of world history. The messianic *dynamic of the provisional* creates the strength of America, but the *provisional life* is also the weakness of America. To live with a dream and a hope in its realization is something great and extraordinary. But this life in dream is also something very unreal. One

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lives in the future, inquires about the realm of possibilities, and thereby depreciates what is real and present. The messianic life has both elements in itself: On the one hand, it is able to draw the future into the present and to do already today what will be tomorrow. On the other hand, it can only live in the postponement in which nothing is done in a final way but only in a provisional and experimental way.

To live as a Christian with the American dream can only mean to combine the dynamic of the provisional with the pathos of the final, and in place of the experimental lifestyle, to develop a lifestyle which combines the outline of hope with the sacrifice of love. Only if one can live, love and sacrifice life here with one's whole heart does one really trust in the resurrection of the crucified Christ. The hope which is born out of the resurrection of Christ prepares one to live fully in the present and with ultimate love that life which is once for all. To leave life and death in the suspension of the experiment will mean to miss death but also life.

A PEOPLE'S PARISH

MICHAEL TRUE

The Wisconsin Community of the Living Spirit

At a time when many people are dissatisfied with the state of liturgy in the Catholic Church, the survival and continuing strength of a religious group that has developed its own style of liturgical celebration deserves special attention, if not outright commendation. Numerous attempts to discover a new language for Christian worship over the past twenty years have either died as "underground churches" or "guitar Masses" or (as in the case of traditionalists' effort to continue Tridentine Masses) have been systematically suppressed.

In local parishes, on the other hand, about the only vestiges of attempts to change the old centralized patterns are the gesture of peace after the consecration, the stilted official English translations of the Mass, and an occasional lay person, now deaconized, but rather thoroughly confined by the usual clerical routine.

Yet after five to ten years, some of the experimental religious groups have taken on lives of their own, and in several instances suggest a form for changes incorporating the needs and hopes of a changing Catholic constituency that is only infrequently aware of or attentive to the National Council of Catholic Bishops or to the legislative language of Canon Law. One of the most striking characteristics of these primarily experimental groups, in fact, is their positive sense of themselves. The mood that brought them into being, a sense of alienation from or even hostility to the chacnery, to "the establishment," has been replaced by a positive sense of modest, but purposeful mission to bind up wounds, to bless, to carry on, with a confidence in themselves and their place in the larger community.

Among several obvious models for such experimental change, the Community of the Living Spirit, in Waukesha, Wisconsin, provides a useful example. Although it began as a liturgical group, its most original characteristic at this time is organization—not so much *what* it has developed in its liturgy, but *how* it has developed as a congregation. Since the summer of 1971, in a city of 50,000 people twenty miles west of Milwaukee, the Community has worked to combine reverence with relevance and to maintain a non-geographic parish, with an ambitious educational program for adults and children and numerous activities expressing fundamental social and political concerns.

In its initial proposal, presented to the archdiocesan priest senate of Milwaukee, in June, 1971, a group of people, most of them from a traditional Catholic parish, asked for a year's trial period "for a Waukesha community mission parish to form and function," pledging themselves "to teach our members about their faith, become more aware of the spiritual and corporal needs of our fellow man, and bring the Church to people who have abandoned this part of their lives."

The germ for the community existed from early meetings in 1970, with the first expreimental liturgy performed in St. William's parish gym, on November 29 of that year. From that point to now, the growth and development has been steady, but trying, risky, and slow. The work of the Community reflects careful planning and broad involvement by many people, with the determined effort of the usual, dedicated core. As one member, Dolores Kosednar, a nurse and mother of nine children said, "Each time the community seemed about to come apart, something happened to pull us through the crisis and back into shape."

In the intervening six years, they have found various

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ways, some traditional, some innovative, to carry out the general goals listed in Article II of the Community's bylaw: (1) to be more aware of the needs of people within and outside the Community, and to minister to them; (2) to encourage personal growth through education, "in understanding God's will for the members, collectively and individually"; (3) to celebrate life through a meaningful liturgy, with emphasis upon "the fundamental goodness of the life Jesus Christ has proclaimed to us"; (4) to remain open to change; and (5) to sustain and encourage one another in carrying out these goals.

The Community has survived several local conflicts about what some people referred to as "liturgical abuses." Beginning initially as a "gym" Mass, while still a part of St. William's parish, the liturgy moved first to the local YWCA and finally to the present location in the public school. At St. William's, the janitor, who was somewhat suspicious of their non-traditional style, took to shellacking the gym floor on Saturdays in order to prevent the people from gathering in the gym on Sunday morning. More recently, the Rector of the diocesan seminary drove out from Milwaukee to look into the Community's practices, in relation to Church doctrine. Although he found its priest, Father Marek, neither schismatic nor heretical, the Rector said that he did not understand how "phenomenological sacramentality fits into the mainstream of Catholic thought." At the moment, it seems that neither the Rector nor the diocese is quite sure what to do with the Community. In this happy state of affairs (if one can judge from several outward signs), it thrives.

One of the obvious and principal forces sustaining the Community is the main celebrant for the Sunday liturgy, Father Dean Marek, a priest in his mid-thirties who walks the thin line between creative ministry and ecclesiastical conformity and—most important of all—brings a positive and concerned ministry to the congregation. In describing his work, he returns to a theme first made popular by Pope John XXIII: "I think the professional (the priest) is the one who opens up the door . . . . My philosophy is to provide the opportunity for everyone to be a part of the church."

The care that Father Marek gives to the liturgical celebration is evident in the dialogue homily, the often successful integration of music, reading and activities for the day. He leads—one might say choreographs—the whole performance. According to him, "The purpose of liturgy is to give expression to a person's inner feelings in such a context and such a manner as to further his/her spiritual growth. It attempts to take an event or a happening and put it into focus through sensible means, so that the event, happening, or idea would be a benefit toward human growth."

As I mentioned at the beginning, the liturgy is, at this point, not startlingly original. One recognizes in much of the Sunday celebration many vestiges of the past. One senses, nonetheless, that the liturgy grows naturally out of the community, its meetings and its committee on liturgy. Nothing dramatic, nothing desperately or self-consciously "new," it may not be a liturgy for *everybody* (perhaps we've learned, if nothing else over the past decade, that that's impossible anyway). But in contrast to most of the "official" liturgies, it has a human base: the lives and needs and hopes of the people it includes.

During my two recent visits, for example, the central part of the liturgy focused upon one local and one general concern. (1) The infant baptism of Kelly Marie Hart, with a lighted candle for each member of the congregation and a welcoming procession for the new member of the Community. (2) The discussion, surprisingly coherent in a congregation of about four hundred people, of St. Paul's sexist letter to the Ephesians 5: 21-32. In the Community, women play a more significant part in determining policy than they do in most parishes, and several of them refused to read the section in the Epistle that declares that "wives should be submissive to their husbands."

The liturgy is, in many senses, Father Marek's presentation (one of the only difficulties, it seems to me, as the group endeavors to understand and fulfill its commitment to a decentralized liturgy); but he keeps the celebration alive and clearly focused in a way that is quite foreign to most Catholic liturgies, presently gone stale in the sagging, post-Vatican II dispensation.

During the first few years of the Community's existence, Father Marek's assignment was part time; but in 1972, he resigned his position as chaplain and theology teacher at St. Mary's Academy, in order to devote full time to the Community of the Living Spirit, eventually with the support of the bishop. Recently denied permission to officiate at Catholic weddings (he got the ruling from the chancery second-hand), Father Marek retains his civil faculties to officiate at other marriages. A significant part of his ministry is devoted to divorced Catholics who come to him, he says, as a "last resort." Cut off from the official Church by virtue of their divorce, they are reluctant to remarry unless a priest officiates at the ceremony; casual about some practices of the Catholic Church, they still feel guilty about breaking others.

In the midst of this confusion, Father Marek, like so many priests now ministering to divorced Catholics, tries to give some spiritual guidance in a time of trial. Without condoning divorce, he and the Community try to respond to those facing the trauma of "coming apart." During a recent coffee hour following the Sunday liturgy, I talked with Fred Beckman, for example, who left a local parish and joined the Community of the Living Spirit, where members have helped him through the initial adjustment following his separation.

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One is struck by the balance that the Community has achieved between social action and worship. The emphasis is still liturgical and ministerial, but social action receives more than the usual grudging acceptance characteristic of the traditional parish. From its origin, the Community pledged at least half of its financial resources to people in need. Some members volunteer their services to the Waukesha Community Welfare Department, gathering and distributing clothes and money, trying to respond "in time and energy," as one member said, and not in "patronizing charity." The sermons on Sunday include frequent references and quotations from the *Catholic Worker*, the bulletin of the United Farm Workers, and the publications of various peace and justice groups. Michael Cullen of the Milwaukee 14 spoke, for example, during his days at Casa Maria; and a recent homily was preached by the Peace Pilgrim, an itinerant woman who has already walked over 25,000 miles throughout the United States, calling for an end to war

and the policies of war. Some months ago she stopped in Waukesha, spent several days in the home of Ruth Browne, a long-time member of the Community, and brought her message to the Sunday liturgy.

The structure of the Community has changed with the times and according to the needs of the group. Officers—president, vice-president, treasurer and recording secretary—are elected annually. It is incorporated as a non-profit organization, and holds membership in the local council of churches. Although regarded with some suspicion by the more fundamentalist Protestant churches, as well as by some Catholic parishes, the Community works in close cooperation with most member churches, and a sympathetic Presbyterian minister has served as homilist and advisor on several occasions.

Members of the Community have developed an ambitious education program; in recent years, the budget for education has increased more rapidly than any other aspect of the program. A typical adult weekend, held three times a year at St. Aemelian's Recreational Center in east-central Wisconsin, emphasizes "relationships and how to improve them." Seminars and workshops, with discussants chosen from the Community, include topics such as sexual awareness, parent effectiveness training, people-making (based upon the psychological theories of Virginia Satir) and spirituality.

The principal committees—Education, Liturgy, Membership, and Social—keep the Community in motion, with most of the budget raised through weekly collections. In the coming years, the plans and budget—to allow for a more ambitious program—have substantially increased (from $19,100 to $26,100, with emphasis upon children's education and adult retreats). A slide presentation arranged by Michael Riordan for the recent fifth anniversary celebration reminded the Community of its eventful history and provided the impetus, for some members, for new responsibilities. In the words of Ann Houston, a co-founder of the Community who regards the formal structure as the basis for survival, "Planning time is community building."

From an historical perspective, the achievement of the Community of the Living Spirit follows a pattern or plan that has been imagined or projected in various writings published since Vatican II. In his discussion of "The Language of Christian Worship," for example, Placid Murray, O.S.B., described what happens in communities similar to the one in Wisconsin, where the evolution of a new pattern of worship involves members of the Church at every level, and how necessary such experiments are if the evolution of a new style is ever to take place in Catholic worship. "To speak of liturgy as evolving," Father Murray wrote in 1970, "is not to assume that the liturgies of the past were wrong and must now be corrected. Indeed, the creation of liturgical forms suitable to the needs of our age carries with it the implication that in this world of change the liturgy must continually be renewed so that it can be relevant to the human situation and to people's understanding of the reality of God."

Similarly, in their excellent publication in the Concilium series, Herman Schmidt, S.J., and David Power, O.M.I., of the Gregorian University in Rome, discuss the ways in which, in the past, the Church practically suppressed "all community ministries other than those of the bishop and the ordained priest." Fathers Schmidt and Power have provided, through their writings, a philosophical and theological rationale for the revitalization of what has been called "the alienated liturgy." What the Church waits for are groups of people to test those theoretical formulations. One might say that it is high time, in congregations, for the revelatory word to become flesh.

In a few instances throughout the United States, this necessary experimentation has already begun. There are several styles, several examples that one might point to where creative work has been done, some models—among various possibilities—where effective, if still tentative communities continue to function. Knowingly or unknowingly, the Community of the Living Spirit in Waukesha, Wisconsin—alive and well and thriving—

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does the hard work and takes the necessary risks, saying concretely that the worship of the people of God can be spoken in a contemporary idiom and that the new language and pattern can be as meaningful, at times, as anything from the past.

THE SHALLOWS

THE SCREEN

In the first place, *The Deep* is something of a movie of lost souls, a backwater into which two stars who have never made it as big as they should—Jacqueline Bisset and Robert Shaw—have drifted. It only allows them to splash around in their considerable talents. If the film is too shallow for its stars, moreover, in other, more detrimental ways it is also too shallow for its audience. In the opening scene, for instance, Gail (Bisset) and her boyfriend Dave (Nick Nolte) are scuba diving while on vacation in Bermuda, and the bottom world they visit is such a clean, well-lighted one that we never get over our sense of complacency about it afterwards. She even has the fish eating out of her hand. The real "deep" is presumably murky, sinister and forbidding, but the movie doesn't get that far down. Gail and Dave find traces of sunken treasure on this shelf where they are swimming in the opening scene, and the film stays marooned there throughout. That other deep, the one we thought the title referred to, yawns suggestively beyond the edge of the reef they're on, and occasionally some boulders go tumbling off into it. But as both an oceanographic space and a psychological one, it remains unexplored.

The appeal which the deep itself should have had as the antagonist in this film is of course the same as that which the shark had in the earlier Peter Benchley script, *Jaws*. Mass audience movies like these are always trying to tell us something about where our collective head is. When Americans were afraid of external aggression and foreign ideologies, back in the fifties, science-fiction films were serious business. *It Came from Outer Space,* as a popular title of the day put it, and like "it", *The Body Snatchers* and the errant planet in *When Worlds Collide*, et al., suggested that America was threatened only by extra-terrestial enemies, by invasion from without. But now that kind of science fiction is a joke, as *Star Wars* is demonstrating with great success. It seems that recent events have us more worried about ourselves. This is why nemeses like the shark in *Jaws* or the ocean in *The Deep* come to mind. As sources of terror, they have the advantage of being found at home. Instead of an invader from outer space, they are the enemy within, the one beneath the skin of our own world and, thus, the one secreted inside us ourselves. What the shark in *Jaws* offered as well was the reassurance that such evil is not really evil at all, but rather something inherent in nature—a primordial instinct which, no matter how savage and terrifying it might be, can never be made morally accountable.

But *The Deep* misses this mythological boat by not really making nature the villain of the piece as *Jaws* did. In fact, nature becomes little more than a sideshow in *The Deep*. At the end of the opening sequence, something unseen underneath the hull of the wreck Gail is exploring does grab her probing stick and gives her, and us, quite a turn. But what that something was is then dropped like the stick itself and never confronted again. In subsequent scenes when she, Dave and a local adventurer (Shaw) return to the wreck to hunt for more treasure, the threat of the deep itself is literally shunted off to the side. It is embodied in a single Moray eel which lives on the wreck in a hatch that the three divers must swim past on their way to and from the treasure trove. Being a monster easily circumvented, and living in a niche in the wall like some fairytale dragon in its cave, or a latter-day Grendel, the eel simply doesn't make nature an adequate antagonist. On the contrary, it makes the shipwreck seem like a kind of fun house, where bogus thrills pop out of trap doors, and thereby renders the alleged deep shallower than ever.

Oh sure, the divers are attacked by a bunch of sharks at one point. But these are not representative of nature in all her glory and horror as the one shark in *Jaws* was. They are only acting as agents for the character who is the real villain in this film, a Haitian gangster named Cloche (Louis Gossett) who's after thousands of ampules of morphine among the goodies the divers have recovered from their sunken World War II supply ship. What can the sharks do to top Cloche's own malevolence in chumming tuna and fish blood to attract them around the divers' boats? Nothing. They are only his torpedoes, a gang of paid assassins, a mob of teeth for hire. Cloche is the true villain here, but too human a one to be really contemporary. He reduces the film's plot to an old-fashioned contest between good and evil. He deprives us of that enmity with our own nature, with Nature itself, which the film seemed to promise.

Truth to tell, if only we could enjoy it on its own terms, *The Deep* is not all that bad a thriller. The trouble with its terms is that they move farther and farther away from our expectations, from the confrontation with raw nature we came to the theater looking for. Instead of an exploration of the primordial, the plot turns into the opposite of that, an exploration of history. The divers discover beneath the World War II ship and its cache of morphine the remains of an

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older vessel, an eighteenth-century merchantman containing gold and gems bound from the New World for the mistress of the King of Spain. With the morphine as a decoy for Cloche the divers go after the jewelry, and there is a certain racism here in the fancy that drugs are a fit booty for a black man while only WASPs can appreciate the value of art and history. Despite this implication, however, the false bottom in both the supply ship and the film's plot make for a pretty good adventure story. It's too bad that we don't go to movies any more just to be entertained by such fare. We go only out of more urgent cultural needs now, and those *The Deep* never gets down to.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

an exchange of views

'Exporting Death to Ireland'

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: I find it regrettable that your expert on Irish affairs is an employee of Irish state television and radio, and as such an official of Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien, the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, who has directed that no Republican—Provisional or Official—may appear on the air waves he controls.

Mr. Fisher appears to be doing his duty well. He writes of America, about which he knows nothing, not about Ireland and its problems, which would seem to be the point of the violence in the North of Ireland.

I visited Ireland last summer and was astonished that this story of censorship on television and radio in the Republic is not better known here.

They have a saying in the British House of Commons when a member speaks to a brief: "Declare your interest, Sir!" I wish you had asked Mr. Fisher to declare his interest before you foisted him on your liberal readers.

(DR.) REVA RUBENSTEIN

Pittsburgh, Pa.

To the Editors: "Exporting Death to Ireland" [June 10] was a bad article and it was unethical of *Commonweal* to print it. The article was written by a functionary of the Republic of Ireland, a repressive regime, where trial by jury and other civil rights are in abeyance, where there is torture.

You let the writer say things such as "Irish people, North and South, were pleased etc." That is akin to having Pinochet's man tell us what the people of Chile are thinking.

The four "leading" Irish Americans may have been taken in but you should not. The IRA could not exist if the alternative to it were not so horrible. Southern Irish governments have been hoodwinked into abandoning the Irish Catholics of the North in the past.

Of the civilians killed in the North very few were killed by the IRA. Two thirds of the total has been killed deliberately by Protestant Ultras.

I believe the Southern Irish Government in concert with Britain is trying to muzzle Irish Americans. I favor the IRA, I would give them money for arms, if I could find a way to do it, because such arms are defensive. I can find no one who is sending arms to Ireland. You have fallen for a scam. Shame on you.

(MSGR.) CHARLES O. RICE

Santa Fe., N.M.

To the Editors: Desmond Fisher's article "Exporting Death to Ireland" [June 10] caught my interest as an Irish-American with a horror of bloodshed. I share his hope that the export of guns will stop, but I question his understanding of how to stop it. First, the utility of inflating the Irish body count to the American scale in order to bring it home to us is very dubious. When a single death by violence has no meaning, it is doubtful that 1000 similar ones will. It is the context, rather than the statistics, of violent death that engenders grief and outrage. Moreover, as was the case with Vietnam, television brings home what figures may not. We have seen Belfast. We probably sense its disaster as well as we ever will without going there.

Second, it seems quite unlikely that harassment by U.S. authorities will change the behavior of gun-running groups. The Noraid countersuit suggests instead that harassment has a galvanizing effect. Official harassment and the interest of federal agencies in our activities may well be among the social factors responsible for the romantic lure of the Irish revolution in the first place, which may seem a simple revolution with someone to shoot, quite unlike our own morass. If that is true, increased indefinite pressure at home should lead to more guns and not fewer.

Finally, the perception of the IRA cause as a lost one will be hard to come by at this distance, given the nature of guerrilla war and its reportage. The larger notion that "lost" causes ought to be abandoned is more silly than cynical.

We need a new approach to violence and revolution, and this is a good place to start. Who are the IRA and what do they want? Why do they act as they do? How did they become killers and Marxists, if that's what they are, and how can they be changed? Why do we want to arm them? and would we still if we knew them? A deeper ex-

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change over these questions, disentangled from politic "branding" and inept intervention, will take us a long way in an intriguing direction.

BARBARA SWEENEY FRANCIS

Staten Island, N.Y.

To the Editors: Desmond Fisher, in his article, "Exporting Death to Ireland," [June 10] makes the issue of arms the mainspring of the problem in the North of Ireland. It is not.

The reason for the trouble in Northern Ireland for the last eight years is that there has been a denial of civil rights to the Irish minority. Since the beginning of that government in 1920, they have been discriminated against; they have been oppressed by tendentious laws; and even up to the present time they have been denied representation in the Executive. This was pledged by Britain in a White Paper, 1973. It is one of the issues which brought down the government in a general strike in 1974 when the Unionist majority refused to continue the coalition government in which the Irish minority were represented for a few months. The other was the repudiation of the Council of Ireland in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The crux of the Northern Ireland problem and the cause of conflict and bloodshed is the absence of equality for the Irish minority.

If peace is established without equality, and the turmoil is ended through revulsion, there is little doubt that another generation will take up the issue again. They should not be made to endure what the present generation is suffering.

Peace will come when the British Government secures justice and equality for the Irish minority in fact and not by promises.

In an article on the peace movement titled, "On the Road to Drogheda" by James Gilhooley, *Commonweal*, March 18, he said that at such a peace meeting in Ireland, 1976, he asked Protestant ministers whether there was to be justice as well as peace for the Irish in Northern Ireland. He found them evasive and unwilling to give a direct answer. He quotes Bishop Daly of Derry as saying that justice be included with peace.

The fact that Ian Paisley and his Unionist ultras were not successful in inducing a general strike in May of this year might indicate that more of the Unionists are willing to compromise than before. The British Government in London should try once again to re-establish a coalition on the same basis as the government formed in 1973/4 in which both groups were represented in the Executive. When this has been accomplished, the basis of support for the IRA in the minority community will evanesce, and peace will result, not through the peace movement, but through the realization of justice.

The Irish in the North have had to depend on themselves in this struggle for equality, and for freedom. They have had no help from anyone. Messrs. Nixon, Ford, and Carter have ignored them completely. For Mr. Carter and Mr. Brzezinski, his mentor, it appears that their zeal for human rights does not apply to the Irish since there is no seeming political profit to be gained there.

JOHN BRANIGAN

Reply

Dublin

To the Editors: Dr. Reva Rubenstein accuses you of using an article by a member of the staff of the Irish broadcasting service, a fact which you made known at the time. She then cries shame on you for neglecting to state my position. I fail to follow her logic.

Msgr. Rice would give the IRA money for arms "because such arms are defensive." Why then the overwhelming Catholic reaction to the peace movement and the condemnations of the IRA by Catholic prelates, priests and politicians who are presumably among the community requiring defense and who presumably know a lot more about the IRA than Msgr. Rice?

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Barbara Sweeney Francis is probably right in dismissing as pointless my attempt to illustrate the extent of the death-toll in Northern Ireland by scaling it up to a comparable U.S. level. She is probably right, too, in her other views except for the "silliness" of abandoning a lost cause. If a lost cause in Vietnam was abandoned, whether because of the nature of the television reportage or otherwise, why not one in Northern Ireland?

John Branigan has given an admirably succinct and, in my view, correct statement of the Northern Ireland problem. I did not intend to make the arms issue the mainspring of that problem: justice is the core of it and without justice there will be no peace, or, at least, no lasting peace. The question I was raising was whether a continuation of the IRA's shootings and bombings would bring that justice nearer or whether their campaign, supported as it is by arms and money from U.S. sympathizers, is only making the community divisions deeper and perpetuating them for another generation or two.

DESMOND FISHER

DENNIS O'BRIEN

LOOKING AT AMERICA

America As Art

JOSHUA C. TAYLOR

National Collection of Fine Arts/Smithsonian Press, $25

Joshua C. Taylor's elegantly presented and richly insightful study of the image *Americanus* is bracketed by the figures of two women: the first never was, the last "is" too much. Taylor, Director of the National Collection of Fine Arts, has written in *America as Art* a series of studies on the way in which America has been seen and symbolized by visual artists from the first European guesses at American fauna to the last observed fallout of the present age. The figure that never was is the so-called "Indian Princess" exemplified in a print by Jacob van Meurs of 1671. A moderately dark young woman clad in feathers and tobacco leaves, she appears to be standing on the lip of a cornucopia scattering gold to an ill-assorted group of Indians, Europeans and goats. The image is a symbol, not a portrait of actuality.

The final image in Taylor's study is called *Lady at Table* 1971 by Duane Hanson. Instead of seventeenth century engraved symbol (a small sheet of paper with multiple copies to be distributed for edification, enchantment or to entice colonists), we have the life-size, utterly life-like figure of an overweight woman sitting at an actual table, in actual clothes, reading the *National Enquirer*. Her pocketbook rests against the cheap chair, her market bag leans uncertainly against the pedestal of the table. If the Indian Princess's cornucopia runneth over, so doth the shopping bag, the lunch, the clothes, the figure of the *Lady at Table*.

The initial symbolic promise of so much has become the actual reality of too much. Among the many paradoxes which mark this long trajectory of images, is that the non-existent symbol clearly conveys a message, while the confrontation with the eternally polyeuruthaned sloven sitting in our space yet incapable of discourse forbids communication. As Taylor says, "We are so close to these characters physically and psychologically, and yet there is no possibility of communication . . . a consciousness of a simple 'is-ness' . . . stop(s) us cold. . . ." If the Indian Princess formed a message for America, the *Lady at Table* seems to say that American life has no message, it simply exists utterly resisting meaningful direction and statement.

In between the symbolic savage and Hanson's simple salvage, Taylor studies seven images of America: the American Cousin, the virtue of American landscape, the frontier (a chapter written by John Cawleti), optimistic urban images, folk and mass art, the world art of the New York school of abstractionists and, finally, pop and photo realism. Not all the periods are equally rich in extant visual images and Taylor has been free in extending his analysis to literary material. On all the topics he has something interesting to say and the book can be read as an essay on arts or general intellectual and cultural history. He does not seek only the masterpiece but is interested also in uncultivated art as a figure for a type of American sensibility. For many years an outstanding teacher at the University of Chicago, Taylor brings to these essays the clarity of exposition and subtlety of interpretation which his pupils (including this one) well remember. Using the titles of two of his other books, this collection of pieces on Americana is an exercise in *Learning to Look* and proof that *To See Is To Think.*

While it is seemingly impossible to discover a theme which runs through the image of America chronicled by its artists—and Taylor does not attempt the synopsis—there seem to me to be two themes which repeat themselves so consistently that they are worth noting. These themes are secularism and self-creation.

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An examination of Taylor's book or several of the exhibits and catalogues of American art and craft fostered by our bicentennial year, should strike anyone knowing the scope of western painting with the secular cast of the assembled materials. In the exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Phil*adelphia: Three Centuries of American Art*, to take an example, there were only two pieces which could be regarded as directly religious. Both exceptions prove the rule. In the one case a conventional plaster crucifix (salvaged from some liturgical update?) appeared upside down under a scaffold; the other called "God" was a Dadaist work by Morton Shamberg well enough described by the catalogue: wooden miter box and cast-iron plumbing trap, height 10½". A put-down crucifix and a send-up on God. The rest of the objects at the Philadelphia museum were careful burgherly portraits, elegant highboys, anatomical sketches, detailed city plans and the complexly crafted abstractions of yesterday (quilts) and today. In *America as Art*, there is virtually no religious iconography. Again the exceptions are interesting: George Caleb Bingham paints Daniel Boone leading settlers to the wilderness on the unmistakable model of the Flight into Egypt and there are various apotheoses of Washington and Lincoln based on traditional iconography of the Assumption. But again, the bulk of the book is devoted to Yankee farmers, skyscrapers, meticulous nature studies, and Warhol's Brillo Box. John Stewart Curry paints a baptism, but it is *Baptism in Kansas* (1929) and despite hovering doves the painting is resolutely down to earth and unlikely, as Taylor remarks, "to inspire a flight of fancy." Curry so carefully avoided style that the work can transcend neither toward urban culture (which he despised) nor heavenly thoughts.

Of course when one thinks about the absence of traditional religious painting in America it is no surprise. Insofar as plain-style Protestantism dominated the ecclesial life of America there was no theology for religious images. The separation of church and state prohibited religious image to one great patron. Catholics brought their souvenirs of the old world, but that is not part of the American image. It must say something about the self-understanding of a culture which presents to itself public images related to a religious story whether it is a great golden reclining Buddha or Tintoretto's vast program of biblical paintings in Venice. If Rembrandt's pharisees and saints are so many Dutch burghers in costume, that role is not acted out by American subjects. The Yankee cousin does not become an onlooker at long-ago, ever-present sacred events but remains resolutely sharpening his scythe, smoking his pipe, reading the papers. Curry's baptismal folk have taken a few hard-earned moments of relaxation from the over-sized barn and plain house set in the flat Kansas landscape. They are not caught in a mystical past or an eternal reality, they are about to go back to business.

To say that American painting is secular, however, is only a half-truth. There is an unvarnished facticity to the dominant objects of American art (or, a highly varnished "thinginess" to the chests, presentation urns and pottery of the "useful arts"). However, this very facticity of image and object turns itself into a kind of religious sentiment. How? One of the repeated themes of America and the American artist is the "self-taught" character of the people and its painters. The Indian Princess was virtuous *by nature*, not by culture, and the American painter would be grand without dependence on the Beaux Arts tradition. Mrs. Trollope is appropriately European and horrified when she tells the following tale in her *Domestic Manners of Americans* (1832):

> At length he named an American artist . . . and after declaring him equal to Lawrence . . . he added, "and what is more, madam, he is perfectly self-taught."
>
> I prudently took a few moments before I answered; for the equalling our immortal Lawrence to a vile dauber stuck in my throat . . . at last I remarked on the frequency with which I heard the phrase of *self-taught* used, not as an apology, but as positive praise.
>
> Well, madam, can there be a higher praise? . . . Is it not attributing genius to the author and what is teaching compared to that."

It is not surprising, therefore, that Ruskin's views in *Modern Painters* (1844) were deeply appreciated. Commenting on the landscapes of Claude, Ruskin voiced the aim of much American "factual" art: "Multitudes will laud the composition, and depart with the praise of Claude on their lips—not one will feel as if it were *no* composition, and depart with the praise of God in his heart." America and its painters spring from nature, self-taught, without culture, without the cultivated craft of the masters, outside the ecclesial establishment and its time-blessed icons *so that* nature and nature's God may be expressed in immediacy. The Society for the Advancement of Truth in Art 1863 proclaimed: "We believe that all nature being the perfected work of the Creator should be treated with the reverence due its Author, and by nature they do not mean only the great mountains . . . but also every dear weed that daily gives forth its life unheeded."

Painting followed philosophy in the lusciously detailed nature studies of Aaron Draper Shattuck, Fidelia Bridges and Charles Herbert Moore. The "non-art" of the nineteenth century which celebrated nature plain would seem a million icons distant from the world of pop and photo art, yet the continuity is easily seen. How far is it from the "dear weed that daily gives forth its life unheeded" to Hanson's consummately unimportant Lady who daily gives out her life unheeded? If the weed will have its life recorded, why not the Creator's creatures' creatures: soup cans and advertising signs? (Richard Estes, *Canadian Club*, details Times Square with the fidelity Frederick Church lavished on *Study of a Rock* in 1845.)

When in the late 1940s American

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painting became the center of world painting in the work of artists like Pollock, de Kooning, Rothko and the others of the so-called New York School, the self-creating seeking for a "religious" sentiment endured. The new painting rejects the figurative with as much emotion as the naturalists yearned for it, but the underlying rationale is similar. De Kooning could declare in an echo of Ruskin, "Style is a fraud, I always felt the Greeks were hiding behind their columns." Pollock proclaims a rejection of self-conscious art which would have horrified Mrs. Trollope, "When I am *in* my painting, I'm not aware of what I am doing . . . the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through." The aim of this rejection of style, academic technique and comfortable symbol was to liberate the imagination not for fantasy but, as Taylor remarks about Clifford Still's work, to discover "the reflection of that mystic source that is home to the soul." To that end, Still will justify his great splashes of somber black on somber brown by quoting Blake:

> The Vision of Christ that thou dost see
> Is my Vision's Greatest Enemy:
> Thine is the friend of all Mankind
> Mine speaks in parables to the Blind . , .

It may seem a far cry from the dour Pilgrims who formed the Plymouth settlement to the fashionable chic of the New York art world, but the Puritan sentiment remains. Those black-clothed dissenters who were bold enough to settle the landscape with towns from the Holy Land: Salem, Jericho, Zion, would understand the austere rejection of image and the desire not to *reflect upon* New Jerusalem, but to create it here and now. To the American painters, painting does not depict religious events at second hand, it *is* a religious event. Mark Rothko said, "Pictures must be miraculous."

If one can tease out any thin and tattered moral from America as art, it is that many American painters accept as fully as the Pilgrim fathers or the Captains of Industry, the view that the Heavenly City is at hand in this country. The city is to be pure, God's very kingdom; the painting is to be purged, a present miracle. Interwoven with the belief in the secular Kingdom of God is the vision of America, the American landscape, the American city, the American painter as a New Man, self-creating as the direct work of Nature or Nature's God. The painter need not be *learned* and refer to holy events (Biblical stories or the Ramayana) because the holy is ever-present if one will open his eyes to nature at-hand or to the painter's own act of creation at-hand."

The "meaning" of modern art is a perennial problem and this is hardly the place to discuss such a weighty question, but "meaning" in American art has a special twist. What does it mean to be confronted by Warhol's soup can or a gigantic Kline calligraph? If meaning in art connects to *reference*, "what is this painting about?," then there is a peculiar sense in which American painting lacks reference. An Annunciation in any style is about that event, but Hanson's Lady is just there and refers to nothing. Not exactly the thing-itself but so carefully crafted as to seem the very thing not a sign of the thing. To the extent that American painters eschew style or historical theme (a favorite topic of much of world art), there is no reference. It has been pointed out that landscape art is a late development in Western painting and that it is the first "abstract" art—pure landscape (Turner not Claude) tells no story. There is no Revelation in the foreground, no sages under the trees, to point a moral. Frederick Church's Rock just "is," Rothko's horizons of Promise have no theology. We do not discourse with rocks, or metaphysical sunsets anymore than with the Lady at Table.

The American experience (in deed and in art) might well be seen as a contrast to traditional European experience. Instead of culture handed along or revealed religion remembered ("In that time . . ."), America chooses direct religion (revelation *here*, miracle *now*). This rather extraordinary turn in history may be noted for its accomplishments (in deed and art) or for its *hubris*, but if certain souls seek salva- in American galleries rather than American churches, no American should be surprised.

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SISTER ELLEN MURPHY

WATCHING THE OLYMPICS

They show us in slow motion how
in the perfect action each movement
is ever righting itself in respect
to the other, in respect to the earth
and the space and their laws
from balance to point of balance
the enduring bones leap,
the muscles remember
the rules of flexible elegance,
integrity, grace.

With hearts as with bodies
it is grace that wins every contest;
that survives judgment
day in and day out
as when two persons (or nations)
long pledged to each other
in marriage or friendship
learn to move freely together
forever achieving their balance;
fluid, enduring.

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SEXUAL CRITERIA BY COMMITTEE

RALPH McINERNY

Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought

KOSNICK, ANTHONY, et. al.

Paulist Press, $8.50

It has been said that there is no proposition so outlandish that at least two theologians cannot be found to defend it. In the case of the present book, we are confronted by a document produced by five theologians, thinking and writing as a committee. A great many things are said, not all of them mutually tenable. And there is a large proportion of outlandish propositions.

On the whole, I think this is a bad book. I shall discuss its prose; its idle advocacy of a concept of sexuality broader than the genital; its sketch of a moral methodolgy.

First, then, the prose. The committee says that its perspective is Roman Catholic and North American. This might suggest that the book is not only written in English but also that, to the degree that it must avail itself of a technical prose, it would do so with an eye to what is likely to sound familiar to North American ears. Instead we find sentences like these: "We would, therefore, define human sexuality simply as the way of being in, and relating to, the world as a *male* or *female* person." (p. 82) "Implicit in this view is the realization that we *are* our bodies. . . . Within this embodied view of human existence, sexuality is seen as that aspect of our fleshly being-in-the-world whereby we are present and open to that which is not ourselves, to that which is 'other'. . . . Embodied subjectivity reaches out to another body-subject in order to banish loneliness and to experience the fullness of being-with-another in the human project." (p. 83) "If not acknowledged and integrated into a dialogue with the whole of one's being, the sexual reaching out may pursue a direction independent of and tangential to one's life project." (p. 100) I resist manfully the temptation to put these sentences into English, and thereby show that they are either nonsense or banal, and content myself with the remark that most North American moralists of my acquaintance would find them unintelligible. It is possible that this book will prove to be an argument for forcing moral theologians to return to Latin. One is struck, in comparing the Vatican Declaration of 1975, included in an appendix, with the text of this book. The former is lucid, straightforward, easily understood. By contrast, our committee is forever wandering off into polysyllabic byways where phenomological fustian takes over and the prose becomes at once hyperventilated and over-hyphenated. Like that. The linguistic style of Anglo-American philosophy is not only clearer than the continental, it is also closer to our scholastic tradition; theologians who, for good reasons or bad, wish to distance themselves from their scholastic patrimony need not desert their native tongue as well.

Second, the committee makes an effort to extend the notion of sexuality beyond the genital, but this turns out to be idle for purposes of this book. "For us humans, the teleology of the pleasure bond is an intercoursing of subjectivities. . . . Subjectivity is embodied in either a male or female body." (p. 84) But sex is not merely genital. "We are of the opinion that the two sexes experience existence in subtly different ways by reason of their differences in bodily structure." (p. 84) Nonetheless, "it is in the genital union that the intertwining of subjectivities, of human existence, has the potential for fullest realization." (p. 85) "In view of this understanding of sexuality, it can be said that sexuality serves the development of human persons by calling them to constant creativity, that is, to full openness to being, to the realization of every potential within the personality, to a continued discovery and expression of authentic selfhood." (p. 85) Through this thicket one describes a committee suggesting that copulation is not the only expression of sexuality, that to be a woman, for example, endows one with a capacity to experience reality in a peculiarly feminine way. If this goes contrary to feminism (doubtful, in so trendy a document as this), it nonetheless seems right to me and I should like to see the thought developed. It is not developed here nor, more seriously, is this expanded notion of sexuality operative in the book. Genital sex is the only kind discussed.

Indeed, the suggested expansion of sexuality beyond the genital becomes confused with the claim that genital sex has ends other than procreation. Thus, when the committee says that it thinks it appropriate to broaden the traditional purpose of sexuality "from procreative and unitive to creative and integrative," it is concerned only to create an opening in the direction of extramarital, solitary and homosexual *genital* activity. It is disingenuous of the committee to invoke the Vatican Declaration of 1975 for support. (p. 86) The Vatican Document spoke of conjugal acts "according to true human dignity" which "based on the nature of the human person and his acts, preserve the full sense of mutual self-giving and human procrea-

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tion in the context of true love." (p. 302) The committee puts a strange interpretation on that base.

Third, the committee's animadversions on the methodology of morals. The question "Is this act moral or immoral?" is, the committee feels, doubly flawed. For the quite intelligible question, the committee proposes these substitutes: "Is this act, in and of itself, predictably an appropriate and productive means of expressing human sexuality? Can it constitute, from a perspective that is broadly humanistic and deeply influenced by the Gospel, an objective value or disvalue?" (p. 91) Surely only a committee writing in the wee hours of the morning could consider this sort of thing either clear or helpful, particularly when none of the constitutive terms are ever adequately, or inadequately, defined. ("Broadly humanistic!") But they are impatient with what they have done, fearful that clarity is threatening to emerge. "That any specific act can be measured and evaluated in a way totally adequate to the intricate manifold of human experience is dubious at best. Human sexuality is simply too complex, too mysterious, too sacred a human experience for such categorization. Tentativity is inevitable in the attempt to discern the objective significance of such a mysterious and many-splendored (sic) reality." (p. 91) As the echoes of Tin Pin Alley die away, we may ask: then why say anything at all? Because we must. (p. 91)

It is here that the committee offers criteria in terms of which "the great variety of sexual behavior may be honestly evaluated," the now notorious heptad: self-liberating, other-enriching, honest, faithful, socially responsible, life-serving and joyous. "By focusing on the many-splendored (sic) values of wholesome sexuality and avoiding absolute categorizations of isolated, individual sexual actions, one can arrive at a much more sensitive and responsible method of evaluating the morality of sexual patterns and expressions." (p. 95)

These criteria occupy a second level of moral evaluation. The first level is the level of universal principle. "We have accepted Vatican II's recommendation that the nature of the person and his acts be the fundamental criterion for evaluating wholesome sexual behavior." (p. 96) For the committee, this criterion is synonymous with "creativity and integration." "This principle of creative growth toward integration, which encompasses the Christian meaning of person, reflects an unfolding of Christ's ultimate commandment of love into the sphere of human sexuality." (p. 96) As an abstract formulation, it is absolute and universal.

The second level, the level of the heptad, identifies particular values associated with human sexuality, less abstract ways of stating the "thrust and direction" expressed on Level One. The committee is pleased that these seven values are not expressed in terms of concrete physical actions. But surely they should be distressed to notice that none seems essentially linked to sexuality. I can imagine someone, at least someone on the committee, evaluating handball with reference to the heptad. But let us see if we can understand this talk of "levels." Level One "provides a framework in the light of which the significance and interrelatedness of these various individual values are to be appreciated and interpreted. Though each value may not be equally observed in any particular sexual expression, the substantial violation of any of these values should raise serious question about the ability of that sexual expression to enhance creative and integrative growth of the human person." (p. 97) I take this to suggest a familiar difference between affirmative and negative precepts. "Be creative," "Integrate." "Be honest." "Enjoy." Such affirmative precepts, never mind the examples, can be exemplified in countless ways that are not specified in the precept. Negative precepts are more definite. "Do nothing that thwarts creativity, joy, other-enrichment, etc." We are more likely to be able to specify what thwarts a value than we can specify all the ways in which it can be exemplified.

Level Three consists of concrete norms, rules, precepts, or guidelines. Needless to say, the committee prefers the term "guidelines." What would we expect at this level? The identifying of certain acts which thwart, defeat, negate the values of human sexuality expressed on Levels One and Two. Oddly enough, the committee accepts as a methodological point that no moral precept that forbids a specified kind of action can be absolute. At least I think that is what they are trying to say on p. 97; it is surely the assumption of the guideline chapter, Chapter V. But surely nothing is easier than to formulate such precepts. "Do not murder." "Do not steal." "Do not lie." "Do not commit adultery." These precepts entail that murder, theft, lying and adultery are always wrong, and so they are. These are kinds of acts which negate, thwart, deny fundamental moral values. Murder is not sometimes wrong, adultery is not occasionally immoral, theft is always bad. The problem of moral evaluation is hard enough without introducing confusion on this level. I suspect that what the committee systematically confuses is the identification of certain *kinds* of action as immoral or moral with evaluating or identifying acts of these kinds. Is this taking of a human ilfe an instance of murder? Is this use of the property of another theft? The committee's confusion on this pretty well vitiates everything it has to say in Chapter V.

Once the theologian was a man who accepted God's revealed word as true and brought to bear on its interpretation man's secular knowledge. If the committee is representative of what theology has become, the theologian's point of reference is the zeitgeist, he is charmingly credulous where the secular sciences are concerned, and nothing of revelation or tradition is safe from his revisionary zeal. What is one to make of the remark that the Bible does not ab-

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solutely forbid any form of sexual behavior, regardless of circumstances? What is one to make of an interpretation of St. Paul's straightforward condemnations as random remarks on the Corinthian waterfront? In *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold,* Waugh writes that there was a phrase, common at the time, It is later than you think. Nonetheless, he adds, it was never later than Gilbert Pinfold thought. I should not be surprised if there are some who will regard this book as a breakthrough.

The Most Splendid Failure: Faulkner's "The Sound and the Fury"

ANDRE BLEIKASTEN

Indiana U. Press, $12.50

A Loving Gentleman

META CARPENTER WILDE & ORIN BORSTEN

Simon and Schuster, $9.95

Bitterweeds: Life with William Faulkner at Rowan Oak

MALCOLM A. FRANKLIN

Soc. for the Study of Traditional Culture (Irving, Texas), $20

Selected Letters of William Faulkner

EDITED BY JOSEPH BLOTNER

Random House, $15

PATRICK SAMWAY

And now I realize for the first time what an amazing gift I had: uneducated in every formal sense, without even very literate, let alone literary, companions, yet to have made the things I made. I don't know where it came from. I don't know why God or gods or whoever it was, selected me to be the vessel. Believe me, this is not humility, false modesty: it is simply amazement.

Faulkner's letter to Joan Williams, Wednesday [29 Apr. 1953]

These four books are representative, for good or for bad, of the recent material concerning Faulkner's life and fiction. Bleikasten's extended study of Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* masterfully explores each chapter of one of Faulkner's more difficult novels, in addition to providing an analysis of Faulkner's literary apprenticeship leading up to the creation of this novel. Bleikasten, professor of English literature at the University of Strasbourg and no stranger to Faulkner studies, incorporates in his methodology a sensitivity to the critical developments on both sides of the Atlantic. He subscribes to no particular school of criticism, whether it be Freudian, structuralist, or psychoanalytic, but has been genuinely open to all the possible, and reasonable, dimensions of the text.

Bleikasten reads the novel as one might approach an orchestral score, reading it both vertically and horizontally or (paradigmatically and syntagmatically as he puts it), in an attempt to focus on the internal development of the novel and capture its movement and momentum, particularly as the novel relates Caddy Compson to the lives of her three brothers. The genesis of this novel can be compared to a *Trauerarbeit,* a work of mourning, reflecting Faulkner's statement, "So I, who had never had a sister and was fated to lose my daughter in infancy, set out to make myself a beautiful and tragic little girl." Bleikasten stresses that Caddy serves as a "fiction within the fiction, her presence in the novel being rendered in such a way as to make her appear throughout as a pure figure of *absence.*"

Caddy, who assumes the aspects of sister, mother, virgin, whore, angel, and demon, is often present to her brothers when they summon up the images of trees, water, twilight, and honeysuckle. Benjy's "polylogue" shows that he confronts the eventual absence of Caddy in a way that is inflexible, rigid, fragmented, where none of the elements in his life add up to a meaningful whole; he does not break out of the confines of his linguistic enclosure and, unlike Quentin, speculate about his future relationship with his sister. All three brothers, however, center their relationships with Caddy on various aspects of sex and death. Though Benjy reports to the reader discrete images and pieces of dialogue, he does not grasp the significance of his life. Benjy's chapter serves as a prologue to the book, as Faulkner said: ". . . like the gravediggers in Elizabethan dramas. He serves his purpose and is gone."

Quentin, too, suffers from the acute loss of his sister as she leaves the family unit to seek a life of her own. His mind cannot understand the life Caddy had chosen for herself and he slides from one conception of her to another until he ultimately decides to accept the logical, final solution to his anxiety: suicide. In contrast to Benjy, psychological and moral issues are examined with excruciating persistence and Quentin eventually loses control of language, as the final few pages of his section reveal. The haunting voices of the past, without the pastness of the past, dominate Quentin's consciousness as his death wish accelerates. As Bleikasten says, Quentin is "the locus of alienating identifications rather than the location of identity." The two powers of Eros and Thanatos which tore apart Quentin's life are reconciled in the "cosmic motherhood of Thalassa."

The remaining Compson brother, the one who physically survives the family's decline longer than the other two, is a travesty on Faulkner's notion of endurance. Typically Compson, Jason substitutes money for genuine affection and he, too, becomes inextricably involved in the process of self-estrangement. All his fears are realized; he is exploited, robbed, victimized by the one person he tried to control and dominate. Ironically, his rationality works against him and unwittingly he traps himself in a living death.

Although the fourth section of the novel presents the same imagery of destruction and exhaustion as the first three sections, Bleikasten shows with tremendous clarity and analytic concern that the Dilsey section gives an

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equilibrium to the novel without having it fall necessarily into the category of a "Christian novel." Dilsey can face the future and not be duped by time; it is her involvement with the word of God, however, that reveals the redeeming aspect of her personality. Reverend Shegog, a monkey-like minister who initially disappoints the congregation, transfigures Dilsey and the other blacks in church, not because of his own personality, but because he allows them to be transformed by the power of God's word. For Bleikasten, this sermon places the mythic into the fictional, the nonliterary into the literary; in some ways, Shegog is an analogue of the author, the novelist himself, he allows the power of the Word to capture his audience. As Bleikasten rightly suggests, the sermon raises the novel to a new literary level without automatically injecting a theological solution into the problems of the Compson family that have been so dramatically portrayed. *The Most Splendid Failure* is the best single analysis of *The Sound and the Fury*; it is based on sound, critical methods and extensive reading and careful evaluation of prior criticism. Bleikasten manifests a sense of proportion, taste, and intellectual discernment that few critics ever possess.

Both Meta Carpenter Wilde and Malcolm Franklin have written books which attempt to reveal the non-literary dimension of Faulkner's life; unfortunately, the first is unduly inflated and the second disguises more than it reveals. During Faulkner's career in Hollywood, he had a close relationship with Meta Carpenter beginning in 1935 when he started working with Howard Hawks. In the years to follow, when Faulkner had to remain away from Oxford, Mississippi, in order to earn money to pay his nagging debts, he turned to Meta for affection and emotional support. This book, like poorly written nineteenth century hagiography, records in exaggerated detail intimate conversations between these two lovers, conversations that even a saint could not possibly have remembered.

Little in the books is of value, certainly nothing to do with Faulkner as a novelist, and had the author felt a greater sense of sacrifice and restraint, an eighth of what she has written would have sufficed. Ironically, the most interesting section of the book deals with the author's marriage to the pianist, Wolfgang Rebner, and her subsequent trip to Germany as a Gentile who had married a German Jew whose family was under scrutiny by Hitler's SS guard. As Joan Williams has recently written about this book, it will unfortunately be read "largely by people who never have read or will read, any of his [Faulkner's] words that come from anguish." Malcolm Franklin, on the other hand, Faulkner's wife's son by her first marriage, gives a down-home view of Faulkner as a quiet man who cared for his family at Rowan Oak. Franklin relates his versions of the familiar Faulkner stories (the Judith Shegog episode, the scary Halloweens, the excursions on Sardis reservoir); one suspects, however, from the nuances of the word "bitterweeds" in the title, that Franklin could have shared other, more dramatically personal reminiscences of Faulkner, had he wanted to.

Faulkner's *Selected Letters*, edited by Joseph Blotner, presently William Faulkner Lecturer at Ole Miss and author of the excellent *Faulkner: A Biography*, come at a time when serious Faulkner research and scholarship are reaching new heights. Many of these letters, written between 1918-1962 to friends, relatives, agents, and editors, tend to focus on two of Faulkner's more pressing concerns: his desire to place his works-in-progress and his need for money to support his family. These letters, many of them quite pedestrian and matter-of-fact, do not give us a sense that Faulkner was using the epistle or brief note as a place for experimenting with style; this, in itself, gives a tremendous insight into the everyday Faulkner who did not divorce himself from the demands of the immediate.

On rare occasions, Faulkner rose above his daily problems, such as his troublesome contractual relationship with William Herndon, the bother of being surrounded by "snow, dogs, Indians, Red Coats, and Nazi spies" while working on the film called *Northern Pursuit*, or the task of discussing with his nephew the nature of the inscription for his mother's tomb, to express his feelings about his own talent:

> I have written too fast, too much. I decided what seems to me now a long time ago that something worth saying knew better than I did how it needed to be said, and that it was better said poorly than not said. And besides, there would always be a next time, since there is only one truth and endurance and pity and courage. [Faulkner to Warren Beck, 6 July 1941]

In many of these letters Faulkner alerted his editors and agents to the story or novel he was then writing, partly I think, as a way of indicating schematically to himself the outline of the story, as his December 1938 letter to Robert Haas indicates concerning the plan of the Snopes trilogy, and partly as a way of setting up a work schedule which would serve as a tangible reminder:

> There are two more chapters after this. They are already printed as short stories, will need some rewriting. I don't know how much. I have had to put the mss. aside twice to rewrite short stories to keep pot boiling, will have to hammer out another one now. Then I will get back at the mss. I should have it all done by Oct. 10. [Letter to Random House. August 1939]

In all, these letters reveal Faulkner as a private individual who did not shrink from the challenges and responsibilities that were part of his life. It seems clear that he never expected, at least for a good part of his life, that his letters would be a matter of public interest. He once wrote, "It is my aim, and every effort bent, that the sum and history of my life, which in the same sentence is my obit and

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epitaph too, shall be them both: He made the books and he died." Professor Blotner has judiciously selected those letters which, for the most part, are not available to the general public and provided suitable notes so that the reader can easily trace Faulkner's preoccupations from one letter to the next. And best of all, Faulkner's letters never call attention to themselves, but serve instead as a valuable prologue to his fiction.

Teilhard: The Man, The Priest, The Scientist

MARY LUKAS and ELLEN LUKAS

Doubleday, $10

J. P. APPLEYARD

Biographies promise what they can't deliver. They set out to explain the hidden roots of a person's life, but all they can really tell us is what he or she did, what happened to them. All the letters, diaries, interviews with surviving friends and relatives, fill in a picture that is inevitably a surface; the face becomes clearer and more detailed, but the more we stare at it the more mysterious become the motives of action, the source of values, what Camus calls the "two or three great and simple images" in whose presence the heart first opened.

One reason is that biographies begin too late. They have to. Few childhoods are well documented. The subject emerges only when he does something distinctive, publishes, develops a public identity. What we would really like to know for our own instruction, *why* he acted as he did, what made the later choices so compelling, remains buried in those early years. Descriptions of the geography of his birthplace, the situation of his family, the temper of the age, don't compensate; they oversimplify, and they imply a determinism which is at odds with the uniqueness the biographer sets out to explain.

This absorbing new biography of Teilhard de Chardin presents the problem all the more clearly because it is such a lively study of the man, his friendships, the circumstances of his Jesuit life, and the crises and sufferings his writings and ideas brought him. The genre is hagiography—a model of someone coming to a faith, keeping it when others didn't, and suffering for it. And just for that reason we want to know why.

But by the end of the second chapter Teilhard is already an amateur paleontologist, an ordained Jesuit, and an admirer of Bergson's *Creative Evolution;* the fundamental choices seem to have been made. If we look for some clue to his deepest vision, it seems to have been his capacity to look closely at human suffering—the early deaths of his much-loved older brother and two sisters, the trench warfare he experienced as a stretcher-bearer in the French army—and be all the more convinced that there must be some point of view from which physical evil would disappear and matter "be absorbed into Spirit." It was a truth he seems to have grasped early on, and everything he later did—his geological and anthropological studies at Paris, his field work in China between the wars, the early "noncontroversial" *Divine Milieu,* his major work *The Phenomenon of Man,* the researches of his last years in New York —filled it in and expanded its meaning for him. But how this conviction sustained him in his personal life is not so clear, and it is the story of the man that the Lukases have set out to tell.

> "The fundamental bearing of my life has always been to prove that the love of God justifies and exalts, rather than destroys, earthly powers of knowing and loving. . . . I dream of going to God under the pressures of the strongest and most violent currents of the earth!"
>
> —Teilhard

It is a fascinating story, because even without a motorcycle Teilhard was every bit as romantic a figure as Evelyn Waugh's legendary Fr. Rothschild: courtly, ascetic, well-connected, in on the discovery of the Peking skull, the very embodiment of the conflict between science and religion and in some ways the first of the hyphenated priests, *samizdat* writer, intellectual martyr at the hands of Vatican curialists and nervous Jesuit superiors, and, what is more to the point for us, a protoype of that contemporary phenomenon, the faithful dissenter. In fact, if Teilhard had suffered less, had cheerfully reconciled his allegiances and satisfied his critics, he would be far less interesting to us, less of a model from which to discover how to live out our own versions of faith and doubt.

Though I think that the Lukases are finally unable to explain how Teilhard kept faith, and perhaps my point is that no one can, they have written a very readable account of his life. It is not a study of the growth of his ideas, as Claude Cuenot's biography (1965) was. The strength of their book is in its narrative details; they have interviewed many of those who figured in Teilhard's story, have researched in fascinating quarters, and they present their subject against the intellectual and social background of the age. Little is documented, however, and so it is impossible to challenge their interpretation of events; inevitably, one would like to know more about certain matters. Their summary overviews of certain religious and philosophical controversies tend towards oversimplification, and some readers might be put off by the novelistic descriptions of Peking streets and Red Sea sunsets and accounts of how persons in the story thought and felt. These have a legitimate purpose, however, in a book whose aim is not scholarly understanding of its subject but imaginative identification with him. It does this quite well.

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Jazz Is

NAT HENTOFF

Random House, $10

Jazz People

DAN MORGENSTERN

Abrams, $25

The Pleasures of Jazz

LEONARD FEATHER

Horizon, $7.95

The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Seventies

LEONARD FEATHER & IRA GITLER

Horizon, $20

LINDA KUEHL

Nat Hentoff is a left-wing jazz critic, mystic of a radical mystique, self-admitted worshipper and proud hangout partner of the jazz man whose only law is *change*. The jazz man tells Hentoff that no critic can translate his music into words ("If the music doesn't say it, how can words say it for the music?"), and Hentoff takes his cue. In *Jazz Is*, he lets the cool cats speak for themselves, providing biographical contexts for their inchoate phrasings, and giving the reader an education by osmosis. The reader absorbs that the jazz man is a romantic egoist ("Everything I've lived is in my music"). He interprets the same music differently each time ("I wouldn't play it again the same way—even if I could, which I can't"). He invents by taking risks ("taking chances every goddamned session, going out there naked every night . . . on a very high wire without a net"). He is impervious to audience demand ("Don't play what the public wants—you play what you want and let the public pick up what you are doing, even if it takes them fifteen, twenty years").

Exhilarated by such authentic Existentialism, as well as by the laughter, irony, sensuousness and deep blues he loves in jazz, Hentoff submits to the artist who creates in a perpetual "state of becoming." The jazz man warns him, "You just can't keep the music unless you move with it," and Hentoff moves. He embraces an avant-garde, chiding traditionalists for trying to preserve a "spirit-music" under glass.

One traditionalist among jazz critics, though by no means a mummifier, is Dan Morgenstern. He takes a "great man" perspective on jazz history, refuting the popular myth that jazz was born exclusively in New Orleans ("Jazz evolved whenever African and European musical practices impinged upon each other, which is to say wherever black and white Americans came into contact"). But he does grant that city "honorable title as the birth-place of jazz" because on July 4, 1900, Louis Armstrong was born there. To Morgenstern's mind, Armstrong was the "original source for every single important artist in jazz"—the "genius" who "transformed jazz from an interesting and even remarkable folk and dance music to an art form, a medium for individual expression."

Traditionalist Morgenstern departs from Hentoff on the decisive issue of the current avant-garde conveniently termed the "free-jazz" movement. Morgenstern finds the music and legacy of its spiritual leader, John Coletrane, "abrasive," where Hentoff finds it "frontier-expanding." Morgenstern sees no progress since Coletrane's mid-1960s "increasingly ecstatic, incantatory, extended improvisation," while Hentoff is awed by his "harmonic language [that] has gone beyond chords to tone clusters, diverse fusions of pitches and timbres, and spirals of colors for which there is as yet no harmonic nomenclature."

This division between critics on the avant-garde is perennially significant. It indicates the challenge of a revolutionary music which—by the internal logic and necessity of its inherent lawlessness—changes direction mid-decade virtually every ten years. As the time lag between innovation and acceptance accelerates beyond the progression of any other art form, the burden rests upon the critic to commit himself to one or the other inevitably warring factions. The choice is urgent because the future of jazz seems always to be at stake. It is at stake for the avant-gardist who aims to keep his revolutionary art radically alive; it is at stake for the displaced jazz musician who is displaced—and rendered reactionary—within five or ten years of his own radical thrust. The situation is paradoxical: how to keep the revolution alive without destroying the tradition that was born out of and is perpetuated through revolution? Morgenstern solves this critical dilemma for himself by siding with the displaced revolutionary and solidifying the cyclical process, theorizing its cohesive unity, advocating its respectability, protecting its accruing hall of fame, and insisting that the music is high art.

Between the preservative solidity of Morgenstern's *Jazz People* and the radical nebulousness of Hentoff's *Jazz Is* exists the centrist liberalism of Leonard Feather's *The Pleasures of Jazz*. Where Morgenstern makes confident declarative assessments as ontological historian and Hentoff quotes ambiguities as jazz man's fellow traveler, Feather strikes a compromise. He integrates avant-gardists like Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and Freddie Hubbard and pays tribute to older masters like Billy Eckstein so rightly esteemed as a "virtual founder of modern jazz." When Feather fears he goes precipitously out on a critical limb, he retrieves his equilibrium with the qualifying clause, "It is arguable" and lets musicians do his talking for him.

As liberal jazz critic, Feather's premise is progress. He believes that jazz has a future, an issue made imminent by the jazz musician's not infrequent defection to the far more lucrative medium of electronic rock. In the higher evolution of things, Feather appears to concur with the late alto saxophonist, Cannonball Adderly, that "the most advanced rock listeners . . . will, given the exposure, probably defect to jazz." He takes heart that jazz, since the Fifties, has received "belated recognition . . . as serious music for listening," and is encouraged in his optimism

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by the Sixties' and Seventies' phenomena of classes, clinics and workshops that have "established jazz education as a vital force for progress in an area that had long seemed impregnable." As encyclopedist, mini-biographer and *Los Angeles Times* daily reviewer, he places further faith in the verifiable achievements and successes that he updates in his *Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Seventies* with co-chronicler, Ira Gitler.

Though Feather, Morgenstern and Hentoff demonstrate contrasting temperaments and, therefore, varying points of emphasis and view, they share an evangelism common to the jazz critic who champions an art form that has always been ignorantly and ignominiously dismissed by official American culture. It is unlikely that officialdom will recognize the ruse, so it is unlikely that jazz critics will have the luxury to relax on sticky issues like the so-called "heroin problem" or the relationship between sexuality and jazz. Were they to relax, they might not have to act as advocates and apologists. They would not have to prove, for example, that jazz musicians do, indeed, study in conservatories, teach in universities, play together in concert halls and solo with "long-hair" symphony orchestras, though for those jazz musicians who do not do thus: so what? what does that prove *or* disprove? But each admission would indicate the end of cultural genocide against the only high art—*haute culture*—America has produced, and such celebratory anti-philistinism from the academy does not appear close at hand.

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IN BRIEF

ALCOHOLIC PRIESTS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY, *by Andrew A. Sorensen, Seabury, $8.95.*

The purpose of the research study underlying this book was to find the sociological and psychological factors explaining why some priests become alcoholics (p. 31). "What leads them to drink as they do" (p. 24). In this purpose it does not succeed. Exhaustive previous research has found that there is no background sociological profile that can predict the future alcoholic. Nor is there a discernible "alcoholic personality" until *after* the individual has become an alcoholic.

Sorensen has produced an informative book about clergy alcoholism although relatively little reliable information comes from the 121 priests he interviewed. He makes minute comparisons among six small sub-groups, none of which is a representative sample. The "control" group of 56 non-alcoholics falls into three subgroups (Episcopal priests, Catholic diocesan and religious priests) as does the study group of 65 alcoholics. The alcoholics themselves are two very different kinds of people (p. 111), twenty who are still actively drinking and forty-five who are maintaining sobriety, but the author overlooks this significant difference.

Even though the data base is much too thin and disparate and non-representative to verify the "typology" (p. 156) of the alcoholic priest, or to support the sociological generalizations, this book is the best we have so far as a social science approach to the delicate problem of clergy alcoholism.

JOSEPH H. FICHTER

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 483)

duces a $50 billion Soviet manpower budget which exists only in the Pentagon's imagination."

Mr. Noone has very little knowledge of the Soviet Union if he honestly believes they do not feel threatened. Along with the Chinese threat on their border, many of the surrounding countries have extensive U.S. military installations; moreover, the scar of 20 million killed in the World War II invasion runs deep in the Russian soul. And it is a fact that a major part of the Soviet budget goes for strictly defensive purposes for which there is no corresponding outlay in the U.S. budget.

The main point of my article, however, is to demonstrate that all of us —the entire world community—are increasingly threatened by the nuclear arms race. To reverse this trend—before it is forever too late—requires exposing all the motivating factors, including the distorted claims of the Pentagon and the incredible greed of the arms industry. DOUGLAS MATTERN

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THIS AUGUST 5th ISSUE presents a good sample of *Commonweal*'s timeliness and topicality. Frank Getlein, our Washington columnist, comments on President Carter's rejection of the B-1 bomber and the Pentagon-arms industry connection. Desmond O'Grady tells of the promotion of Cardinal Benelli and its effect on his chances of succeeding Paul VI, while Cokey Roberts describes the situation of church-state relations in present-day Greece, Michael True a new liturgical community.

The lead article, by the distinguished Protestant theologian, Jürgen Moltmann, is a penetrating analysis of the American idea and what it has meant to the peoples of Europe. There is also a spirited Exchange of Views on violence in Ireland. Ralph McInerny's lead review discusses the controversial theologians' report on Human Sexuality. Abigail McCarthy tells what it's like for an author to travel around promoting her new book. Dennis O'Brien writes of Art in America.

Informative as this current sample may be, you will be able to discover for yourself the full force and unique flavor of this lay-directed journal of opinion only by reading successive issues of *Commonweal* for several months. To make this possible for you at a minimum of inconvenience, we are offering you a chance to obtain a five-months trial subscription, 11 issues for only $4—some 350 pages of meaningful political, cultural and religious comment, at half the magazine's single-copy price.

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